



University of Catania
PhD in Economics & Management
A.A. 2012-13

SEMINAR

Research Methods

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March-May 2013

RESEARCH METHODS SEMINAR

PhD Program in Economics and Management
Department of Economics and Business of the University of Catania
Instructors: Giovanni Battista Dagnino and Marco Galvagno
March-May 2013

PURPOSE OF THE SEMINAR

To help student achieving an insightful appreciation of the research process and engendering the fundamental preconditions to develop skills necessary to conduct and write scholarly research publishable in top academic journals.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Each week: Read articles, summarize selected articles, prepare exercises (including reviewing your colleagues' work).
2. In-class intense interaction central to learning.
3. Ongoing development of hypotheses and research design for proposal(s) or paper. Final mini-proposal will consist of a **mini-paper** (8-10 double spaced pages) containing theoretical motivation, hypotheses, research design, proposed test statistics (if possible) and implications if hypotheses supported (as applies to a quantitative research design) **or** theoretical motivation, literature review, research method, propositions (2 or 3) development and conceptual implications (as applies to a qualitative research design).

MINI-PAPER DUE TO THE INSTRUCTORS BY MAY 30, 2013
(PAPER PRESENTATION DATE TO BE SCHEDULED IN JUNE!)

KNOWLEDGE TARGET

1. Core skills: Ability to execute separate parts of 'normal science' projects within professional standards including basic guidelines for theory construction, literature review, inference rules and quasi-experimental design.
2. Advanced and additional skills: Ability to develop impactful hypotheses or propositions; ability to focus and shape scholarly research project; short, medium-run and long term career issues.

OUTLINE

Session 1

Overture: The Process of Publishing in Academic Management Journals

Wednesday March 6, 2013 at 3pm

Presentation by the instructor

Required reading (*compulsory*)

Mangematin V., Baden-Fuller C., 2007. Global Contest in the Production of Business Knowledge. *Long Range Planning*, Volume 41 (1)

Assignment

Reflections by the students on the process of publishing in academic journals

(a two-page report crafted and delivered by each student due by March 25, 2013)

Session 2

Epistemology and the Theory of Science

Wednesday March 13, 2013 at 3pm

Required readings (*compulsory*)

- (1) On Thomas Kuhn: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/thomas-kuhn>
- (2) On Larry Laudan: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/rationality-historicist>
- (3) On Imre Lakatos: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Imre_Lakatos
- (4) On Paul Feyerabend: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feyerabend>
- (5) Bartunek J.M., Rynes S.L., Ireland R.D. (2006). What Makes Management Research Interesting and Why Does it Matter. *Academy of Management Journal*, 49(1): 9-15.
- (6) Davis M. 1971. That's Interesting! Towards a Phenomenology of Sociology and a Sociology of Phenomenology. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 1: 309-344.
- (7) Kuhn T. (1970). *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. (Chapters 1 and 2)
- (8) Latsis S. 1976. *Method and Appraisal in Economics*. London: Routledge (Chapters by Latsis and Blaug).
- (9) Popper K. (1959). *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*. London: Routledge. (Chapter 1)

Additional readings (*optional*)

- Barley, S.R. 2006. When I Write My Masterpiece: Thoughts on What Makes a Paper Interesting. *Academy of Management Journal*, 49: 16-20
- Dutton, J. E., Dukerich, J. M. 2006. The Relational Foundation of Research: An Underappreciated Dimension of Interesting Research. *Academy of Management Journal*, 49: 21-26
- Hull, David. 1988. *Science as a Process: An Evolutionary Account of the Social and Conceptual Development of Science*. Chicago: the University of Chicago Press (especially Chapter 11).

Starting point discussion questions to consider during the readings

1. What is (social) science?
2. If reality is at least partly socially constructed, what are the implications for those of us who study *social* phenomena?
3. What are common *errors* in human inquiry? Can you find examples in the public media?
4. What are the relative strengths and weaknesses of *deductive* and *inductive* reasoning?
5. What are the relative strengths and weaknesses of *positive* and *normative* research?
6. What is a theory? What does it mean logically to formalize a theory? What purposes does this serve?
7. How do you evaluate a theory relative to *competing* theories?
8. What are the strengths and weaknesses of *falsification* as the primary test of theories?
9. What is a paradigm? What are its elements? What role do *paradigms* play for working researchers?
10. Evaluate Kuhn's argument concerning how theories arise.

Assignment

Presentations by students: Each student will make a 8-10 minute in-class formal presentation of the key thrusts of two among the epistemologies of Popper, Kuhn, Lakatos, and Laudan and their applications to the social sciences.

Session 3

Qualitative Approaches and Case-based Research Methods

Wednesday March 20, 2013 at 3pm

Required readings (*compulsory*)

- (1) Van De Ven, A. H. 2007. *Engaged Scholarship. A guide for Organizational and Social Research*. Oxford University Press, Oxford (Chapters 6 and 7).
- (2) Christensen C.M., Carlile P.L. (2009). Course Research: Using the Case Method to Build and Teach Management Theory. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 8(2): 240-251.
- (3) Eisenhardt, K.M. 1989. Building theories from case study research. *Academy of Management Review*, 14: 532-550.
- (4) Eisenhardt, K.M., Graebner M. 2007. Theory Building from Cases: Opportunities and Challenges. *Academy of Management Journal*, 50(1): 25-32.
- (5) Glaser, B.G., and Strauss A.L. 1967. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory. Strategies for Qualitative Research* . Walter de Gruyter.
- (6) Langley, A. 2007. Process Thinking in Strategic Organization. *Strategic Organization*, 5: 271-282.
- (7) Siggelkow, N. 2007. Persuasion with Case Studies. *Academy of Management Journal*, 50: 20-24
- (8) Van de Ven, A.H., Huber G.P. 1990. Longitudinal Field Research Methods for Studying Processes of Organizational Change. *Organization Science*, 1: 213-219.
- (9) Yin, K. 2009. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. Sage (4th Edition)
- *(10) Ozcan P., Eisenhardt K.M. 2009. Origin of Alliance Portfolios: Entrepreneurs, Network Strategy and Firm Performance. *Academy of Management Journal* 52(2): 246-279.

Additional readings (*optional*)

- Bansal P., Corley K. (2011) The Coming of Age for Qualitative Research: Embracing the Diversity of Qualitative Methods. *Academy of Management Journal*, 54(2): 233-237.
- Huy Q.N. 2012. Improving the Odds of Publishing Inductive Qualitative Research in Premier Academic Journals. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 48: 282-287.
- Locke E.A 2007. The Case for Inductive Theory Building. *Journal of Management*, 33(6): 867-890.

Starting point discussion questions to consider during the readings

1. Qualitative research methods: what are **they**?
2. Why and how process thinking and process design are relevant to management research?
3. Introducing case study design: Case study as research design
4. Designing a case study research
5. Analyzing evidences of case studies
6. Multiple case research design: benefits, problems and prospects

Assignments

Written practice 1 (2-page class handout): discuss and criticize in depth by bullet points the empirical contribution of Ozcan & Eisenhardt (2009)*

Written practice 2: proto-research formal in class presentations prepared by students. Each student will make a 8-10 minute presentation of a qualitative and/or case-based approach to a research question that interests her.

Session 4 – On the Theory Building Process
Wednesday March 27, 2013 at 3pm

Required readings (compulsory)

- (1) Van De Ven, A. H. 2007. *Engaged Scholarship. A guide for Organizational and Social Research*, Chapter 4.
- (2) Colquitt, J.A., Zapata-Phelan, C.P. (2007) Trends in Theory Building and Theory Testing: A Five-Decade Study of the *Academy of Management Journal*. *Academy of Management Journal*, 50(6): 1281-1303.
- (3) Corley, K. & Gioia, D. 2011. Building theory about theory building: What constitutes a theoretical contribution? *Academy of Management Review*, 36: 12-32.
- (4) Hitt, M. A., Beamish, P. W., Jackson S., E., Mathieu, J. E. 2007. Building Theoretical and Empirical Bridges across Levels: Multilevel Research in Management. *Academy of Management Journal*, 50: 1385-1399.
- (5) Kilduff, M 2006. Editor's Comment: Publishing Theory. *Academy of Management Review*, 31: 252-255.
- (6) Sutton, R.I., and Staw B.M. 1995. ASQ Forum: What Theory is Not. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 40: 371-384.
- (7) Weick K. E. 1989. Theory Construction as Disciplined Imagination. *Academy of Management Review*, 14: 516-531.
- (8) Weick, K.E. 1995. What Theory is Not, Theorizing Is. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 40: 385- 390.
- (9) Whetten, D. A. 1989. What Constitutes a Theoretical Contribution? *Academy of Management Review*, 14: 490-495.
- *(10) Benner, M. J. 2007. The Incumbent Discount: Stock Market Categories and Response to Radical Technological Change. *Academy of Management Review*, 32: 703-720.

Additional readings (optional)

- Bacarach, S. 1989. Organizational Theories: Some Criteria for Evaluation. *Academy of Management Review*, 14: 496-515.
- Martin, K. D., Cullen, J. B., Johnson, J. L., Parboteeah, K. P. 2007. Deciding to Bribe: A Cross-level Analysis of Firm and Home Country Influences on Bribery Activity. *Academy of Management Journal*, 50: 1401-1422.
- Rousseau, D. 1985. Issues of Level in Organizational Research: Multi-level and Cross-level Perspectives. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 7: 1-37
- Smith, K. & Hitt, M. 2005. Introduction: The process of developing management theory, *Great Minds in Management: The Process of Theory Development*, Oxford University Press, pp. 1-8.
- Whetten, D.. 2002. Modeling-as-Theorizing: A Systematic Methodology for Theory Development. *In Essential Skills for Management Research*. London: Sage Pub.

Starting point discussion questions to consider during the readings

1. What is a theory? What is theorizing according to Karl Weick?
2. What is a theoretical contribution?
3. How is it possible to develop propositions and hypothesis in the theory development process?
4. How and why would you use alternative theories to discuss a research problem?

5. The problem of levels of analysis: units of analysis and focal units, multi-level and cross-level analysis

Assignments

Written practice 1 (2-page class handout): discuss and criticize in depth by bullet points the theoretical contribution of Benner (2007)*

Written practice 2 (class handout) – Working from a theory of your own choice:

1. Generate **TWO** specific testable propositions deduced from a theory.
 - a. State the basic theory you are working with.
 - b. Then show separately how the proposition is implied by the theory (although we will not be stressing constructs and measurement per se, make sure you have defined key terms so that the reader can tell whether the logic makes sense – if you have two propositions, show separately for each one).
2. Show with boxes and arrows the causal model for the proposition(s).

Session 5 – Ph.D. Instruction Manual

(Everything You Always Wanted to Know About PhD, but were afraid to ask)

Tuesday April 16, 2013 at 3pm

References

- (1) Auriol L. (2010), “Careers of Doctorate Holders: Employment and Mobility Patterns”, *STI Working Paper 2010/4*, Statistical Analysis of Science, Technology and Industry, OECD
- (2) Bailey K.D. (2006), *Metodi della ricerca sociale. Vol. 1 - I principi fondamentale*, Il Mulino, Bologna (or. ed. Bailey K.D. (1982) *Methods of Social Research*, New York, The Free Press)
- (3) Belloni L. (1998), “Spiegando la caduta di un filo di miele sul toast migliorano le fibre ottiche e anche tessili”, *Corriere della Sera - Corriere Scienza*, 10/5/1998, p. 26
- (4) Buttà C. (1999), “La produzione e la domanda di ricerca”, *Sinergie*, n. 48, pp. 43-57
- (5) Cyranoski D., Gilbert N., Ledford H., Nayar A. & Yahia M. (2011), “The PhD Factory”, *Nature News*, Vol. 472, pp. 276-279. Available online:
<http://www.nature.com/news/2011/110420/full/472276a.html>
- (6) Cochrane J.H. (2005), *Writing Tips for Ph. D. Students*. Available online:
<http://gsbwww.uchicago.edu/fac/john.cochrane/research/Papers/>
- (7) Hofstee E. (2006), *Constructing a Good Dissertation*. Chapter 1, pp. 91-106
- (8) Maizam A. & Zurinah S. (2008), “Concept Mapping: A Tool For Creating A Literature Review”, *Concept Mapping: Connecting Educators, Proc. of the Third Int. Conference on Concept Mapping*, A. J. Cañas, P. Reiska, M. Åhlberg & J. D. Novak, Eds., Tallinn, Estonia & Helsinki, Finland
- (9) Randolph, Justus (2009). “A Guide to Writing the Dissertation Literature Review. Practical Assessment”, *Research & Evaluation*, 14(13). Available online:
<http://pareonline.net/getvn.asp?v=14&n=13>
- (10) *The Economist* (2010), *Doctoral degrees: The disposable academic*, Dec 16th, pp. Available online: <http://www.economist.com/node/17723223/print>
- (11) Webster J. & Watson R.T. (2002) “Analyzing the past to prepare for the future: writing a literature review”, *MIS Quarterly* Vol. 26 No. 2, pp. xiii-xxiii

Session 6 and 7
Writing Scientific Research Articles
Tuesday April 23, 2013 at 3pm
Tuesday April 30, 2013 at 3pm

Required readings (*compulsory*)

- (1) Cargill, M., O'Connor, P. (2009), *Writing Scientific Research Articles. Strategy and Steps*, Wiley-Blackwell, Oxford, UK
- (2) Kaiser B.N. *et al.*, (2003), "The soybean NRAMP homologue, GmDMT1, is a symbiotic divalent metal transporter capable of ferrous iron transport", *The Plant Journal*, Vol. 35, pp. 295-304. [Provided Example Article]
- (3) Britton-Simmons, K.H., Abbott, K.C., (2008), "Short- and long-term effects of disturbance and propagule pressure on a biological invasion", *Journal of Ecology*, Vol. 96, pp. 68-77. [Provided Example Article]
- (4) Punch, K.F. (2006), *Developing Effective Research Proposal*, SAGE, London, 2nd ed.
- (5) Selected article in your field [Selected Article]
- (6) Your mini paper (Own Article)

Additional readings (*optional*)

- Kumar, R. (2011), *Research Methodology. A step-by-step guide for beginners*, SAGE, London, 3rd ed.
- Clough, P., Nutbrown, C. (2009), *A Student Guide to Methodology*, SAGE, London, 2nd ed.

Starting point discussion questions to consider during the readings

1. What is the structure of a scientific research article?
2. What are the referees' criteria for evaluating manuscripts?
3. How to write a research article?
4. How to respond to editors and referees

Classwork

1. Look at the relevant sections of a provided example article and check whether you can find the described features there.
2. Select an article in your field of research and analyse it for the same features
3. Work on the draft of your article, using the new information you have gained from the analysis

Session 8
Introduction to co-citation analysis
Tuesday May 7, 2013 at 3pm

Required readings (compulsory)

- (1) Culnan, M. J. (1986), "The Intellectual Development of Management Information Systems, 1972-1982: A Co-Citation Analysis", *Management Science*, 32(2), 156-172
- (2) Di Stefano; Gambardella, A.; Verona, G. (2012). Technology push and demand pull perspectives in innovation studies: Current findings and future research directions, *Research Policy*, 41(8): 1283-1295.
- (3) Galvagno, M. (2011). The intellectual structure of the anti-consumption and consumer resistance field: an author co-citation analysis in *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 45, 11/12: 1688-1701.
- (4) Garfield, E. (2001), "From Bibliographic Coupling to Co-Citation Analysis Via Algorithmic Historio-Bibliography: A Citationist's Tribute to Belver C. Griffith", *Paper presented at the Drexel University*, Philadelphia, PA.
- (5) Griffith, B. C., Small, H. G., Stonehill, J. A., & Dey, S. (1974). "The Structure of Scientific Literature, II: Toward a Macro and Microstructure of Science", *Science Studies*, 4, 339-365.
- (6) McCain, K. W. (1990). Mapping Authors in Intellectual Space: A Technical Overview. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science*, 41(6), 433-443.
- (7) Nerur, S.P., Rasheed, A.A., & Natarajan, V. (2008). The intellectual structure of the strategic management field: an author co-citation analysis. *Strategic Management Journal*, 29(3): 319-336.
- (8) White, H. D., & Griffith, B. C. (1981). Author Cocitation: A Literature Measure of Intellectual Structure. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science*, 32(3), 163-171.

Additional readings (optional)

- Baker, D. R. (1990), "Citation Analysis: A Methodological Review", *Social Work Research & Abstracts*, 26(3), 3-10
- Bayer, A. E., Smart, J. C., & McLaughlin, G. W. (1990), "Mapping Intellectual Structure of a Scientific Subfield through Author Cocitations", *Journal of the American Society for Information Science*, 41(6), 444-452
- Crane, D. (1972), *Invisible Colleges: Diffusion of Knowledge in Scientific Communities*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Culnan, M.J., O'Reilly, C.A., & Chatman, J.A. (1990). Intellectual Structure of Research in Organizational Behavior, 1972-1984: A Cocitation Analysis. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science*, 41(6): 453-458.
- Garfield, E. (1979), "Is Citation Analysis a Legitimate Evaluation Tool?", *Scientometrics*, 1(4), 359-375.
- Leydesdorff, L. (2005). Similarity Measures, Author Cocitation Analysis, and Information Theory. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 56(7), 769-772.
- White, H. D., & Griffith, B. C. (1982). Authors as Markers of Intellectual Space: Cocitation in Studies of Science, Technology, and Society. *Journal of Documentation*, 38, 255-272.