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How to start a new research project: a guideline for thesis writers

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Abstract

This paper suggests how to start a new research project. As such, it can be used as a guideline by less experienced thesis writers that are currently finishing their studies on the undergraduate, graduate, or postgraduate level. The basis for the suggestions are publications that link topically to research projects I have started during my theses, revised with co-authors, and published in journals, books, conference proceedings, or edited volumes.

Keywords: guideline, thesis, research project, didactics.

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This presentation builds upon some of my own experience with past research projects

Source of suggestions

Burkert, M., & Lueg, R. 2013. Differences in the sophistication of Value-based Management – The role of top executives. *Management Accounting Research*, 24(1): 3-22.

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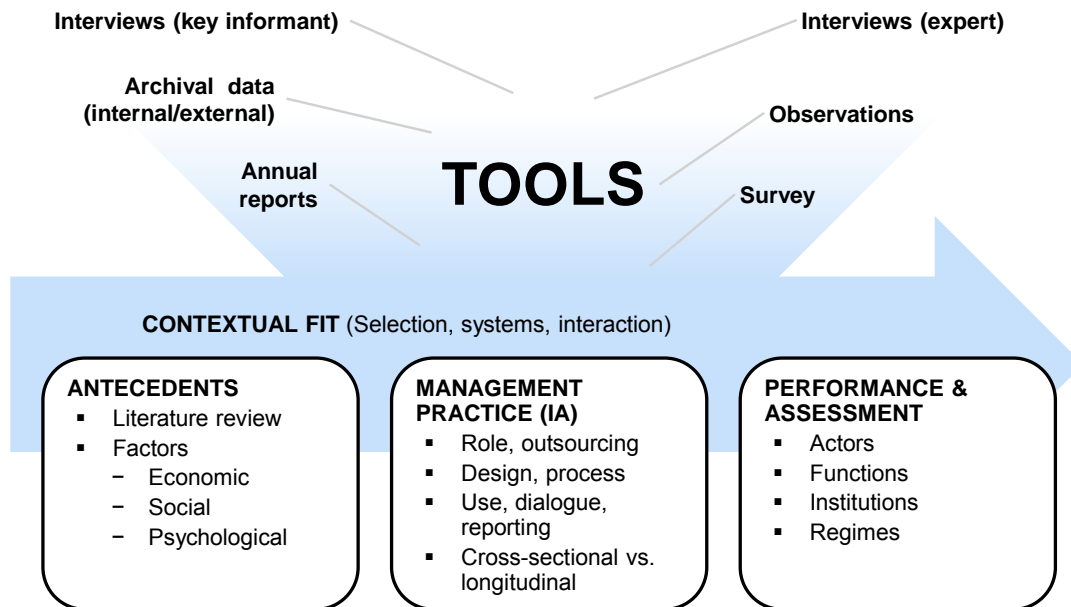
**An example:
How do financial institutions ensure effective control?**

Current contemplations on my next project (1/2)

FRAMEWORK	ISSUES
Question	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How do financial institutions ensure effective control? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Differences to manufacturing / services? – What differentiates control by IA?
Motivation (puzzle)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Little knowledge on control in financial institutions ▪ Bank failures despite control from various functions ▪ Current trend: IA as sub-function of risk management
Roots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Power and independence of other actors in the organization ▪ Lack of internal governance and external regulation (tightness, enforcement) ▪ Skills, knowledge, manpower of IA too low
Persistent anomalies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are issues in IA the root or a byproduct? ▪ How can IA be in the role of a whistle blower?
New theories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ tbd

What data should be accessed to gain a comprehensive understanding of the problem and to be versatile for publications?

Current contemplations on my next project (2/2)



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Larger projects can address the research questions with different data sets and different methodologies

Steps in developing a larger project

1. Start with expert interviews and literature review to understand the industry / function
2. Case study to answer first propositions and to derive hypotheses
3. Take field study on the side if possible (1 company questionnaire across actors / departments)
4. Large scale study involving audited or archival data

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Basis of recommendations / References for further reading

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