Publishing in Top Journals

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What Makes a Good Research Topic?

• Managerially relevant
• Theory-driven, leading to testable hypotheses
• Likely to advance knowledge in a substantive way
• Organizational *performance* as a central construct
• Explanations that most closely represent the phenomenon of interest; complex models
• Leverages your strengths and competencies
Some ‘Hot’ Topics in IB

- Emerging markets and their characteristics and role in IB (e.g., institutional context)
- ‘Risk Resilient’ enterprise, risk assessment and mitigation in international markets
- Digital transformation; digital technologies in IB
- Emergent forms of exchange, i.e., peer-to-peer businesses and platform capitalism (Uber, Airbnb)
- International entrepreneurship
- Global corporate citizenship; social responsibility
- Applying business and management models to internationalizing NGOs and non-profits
Phenomenon-Based Research

Much research is incremental, highly theory- or methods-driven, or detached from real-world phenomena.

The goals of phenomenon-based research is to accurately and insightfully explain a real-world phenomenon or phenomena.

Research should describe, conceptualize, and explain a phenomenon sufficient to facilitate theorizing and the development of viable research designs. The researcher must be able to assess an explanation via empirical research.

Exploratory vs. Confirmatory Research

# Elements of Empirical Research

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| Research question        | - Focuses a study  
- Narrows the topic area to a meaningful, manageable size  
- Addresses issues of theoretical and practical significance  
- Points toward a viable research project—that is, the question can be answered |
| Prior work               | - The state of the literature  
- Existing theoretical and empirical research papers that pertain to the topic of the current study  
- An aid in identifying unanswered questions, unexplored areas, relevant constructs, and areas of low agreement |
| Research design          | - Type of data to be collected  
- Data collection tools and procedures  
- Type of analysis planned  
- Finding/selection of sites for collecting data |
| Contribution to literature | - The theory developed as an outcome of the study  
- New ideas that contest conventional wisdom, challenge prior assumptions, integrate prior streams of research to produce a new model, or refine understanding of a phenomenon  
- Any practical insights drawn from the findings that may be suggested by the researcher |

Research Best Practice

• Develop your own “core competence”

• Focusing allows you to . . .
  
  ➥ Use limited resources efficiently (time, brains, money)
  
  ➥ Become an expert in your field (=> grants, consulting)
  
  ➥ Publish in good journals sooner

• By consistently aiming to do quality research, you will improve your creativity, paper crafting skills, and ability to generate great ideas
Publishing is really about marketing your intellectual work. You cannot impact your field unless you publish.
Writing Best Practice

• Everyone struggles with research and writing. It is one of the aspects of scholarship that makes the professor’s job distinctive and meaningful.

• Discipline, consistency, and persistence are key.

• Helpful:
  -- having a good place to write
  -- having quiet time every day, without interruptions
  -- make writing a habit

• The more you write, the better you get, and the easier it becomes.
Gatekeepers

• You are writing the paper for 3-4 gatekeepers

• Try to anticipate their potential objections

• Acknowledge key contributors; build your research on the work of others

• Be prepared for harsh and inconsistent reviews; don’t take it personally

• Rejection is not failure if you learn from it!
  – Everyone gets rejections, even top scholars
  – Persistence is the key to success
Publishing Strategy

• Know the journal before you submit:
  -- What kinds of works do they usually publish?
  -- What’s their style?
  -- Is your paper appropriately targeted?

• Initially, manuscripts are evaluated for quality and fit with the journal’s editorial policy. Desk rejects are fairly common at top journals.

• Good journals seek insightful, innovative and impactful research that:
  -- breaks new ground
  -- addresses real-world phenomena
  -- builds on extant research, and
  -- clearly states the intended research contribution
Rules for R&R

• Be timely
• Try to sense if the editor is “on your side”
• Do what the editor and reviewers ask (don’t be too proud or resistant)
• Carefully explain to the reviewers how you have followed their suggestions
• Consider the value of adding a co-author
• Consider consulting the Editor; but be diplomatic
• If you cannot address most reviewer concerns, consider turning to another publication
JIBS Ranking

- Five-Year Impact Factor is **6.2** for *JIBS* (2017) in Journal Citation Reports.

- Steadily rising over the years.

- **11th** (out of 115) in the *Management* category.

- **6th** (out of 185) in the *Business* category, ahead of most other top tier journals.

- Listed in the *Financial Times* top 25 journal listing.
JIBS Topic Areas

• The activities, strategies, structures and decision-making processes of international organizations;

• Interactions between international firms and other actors, organizations, institutions, and markets;

• The cross-border activities of firms (e.g., intrafirm trade, finance, investment, technology transfers, offshore services);

• How the international environment (e.g., cultural, economic, legal, political) affects the activities, strategies, structures and decision-making processes of firms;
The international dimensions of organizational forms (e.g., strategic alliances, M&As) and activities (e.g., entrepreneurship, knowledge-based competition, corporate governance); and

Cross-country comparative studies of businesses, business processes and organizational behavior in different countries and environments.

JIBS welcomes submissions from across all business disciplines

Published articles in the past 5 years have covered:

- Strategic Management: 25%
- Cross-Cultural Management: 9%
- Economics/Political Environment: 15%
- Accounting & Finance: 13%
- Human Resource Management: 7%
- IB Theory/Methods: 11%
- Management: 11%
- Marketing & Supply Chain Management: 9%
Fit with *JIBS*

- Submitted manuscripts are evaluated for quality and fit with *JIBS* Statement of Editorial Policy.
- A submission must largely involve doing business in, or with, more than one country. (Thus, for example, studies on “doing business in X” are usually insufficient.)
- *JIBS* prefers innovative papers that start or redirect a line of inquiry and integrate across disciplines.
- Papers are welcome that combine and integrate theories and concepts from *different disciplines*. 
Fit with *JIBS*, cont’d

- Conceptual and theory-development papers with no empirical content or only cases are welcome, but the theory development must be especially strong.

- Papers based on exploratory or qualitative research should aim at developing propositions or hypotheses.

- Papers are assessed in terms of contribution-to-length ratio.