



Aalto University
School of Business

Bachelor Thesis Seminar – Thesis Structure

Emma Salminen

Suggested Structure

- 1. Cover Page**
- 2. Table of Contents**
- 3. Introduction**
- 4. Main Body**
- 5. Discussion/Implications**
 - 5.1 Theoretical Implications
 - 5.2 Managerial Implications
- 6. Conclusion**
7. (Appendix - optional)

In-Class Task

Please get into groups of 5:

20 Mins: Discuss the readings with your group members. Prepare one/two PPT slides including the most important information on

- The purpose of the section
- How to structure the section
- What content to include, not include
- Any useful sentences to be applied in this particular section (?)

10 Mins per group: explain and teach the others

Group topics and readings

Group 1 - Introduction

- - "An Introduction to Writing a Bachelor Thesis" - Section 3.1 *Introduction*
 - Cetin and Hackam (2005) - Section *The Introduction Section*
 - Provenzale (2006) - *Principle 2*

Group 2 – Main section


- - "An Introduction to Writing a Bachelor Thesis" - Section: 3.2 *Main Section*
 - Provenzale (2006) - *Principles 3, 4*

Group 3 – Discussion and Implications

- - "An Introduction to Writing a Bachelor Thesis" - Section: 3.3 *Discussion and Implications*
 - Cetin and Hackam (2005) - Sections: *Results, Discussion*
 - Provenzale (2006) - *Principles 5,6, 8*

Example

More Than One Way to Float Your Boat: Product Use and Sustainability Impacts

Diane M. Martin,¹ Anu A. Harju,²  Emma Salminen,³
and Bianca Koroschetz⁴

Journal of Macromarketing
1-17
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Abstract

Concern for sustainability crosses multiple areas of scholarly inquiry. At the macro level, sustainability research has focused primarily on institutional actors and systemic change efforts. At the consumer level, sustainability research has focused primarily on consumer product choice and post-use disposal. Employing a practice theory lens, this study examines how consumer practices during product use results in a wide variance in overall environmental sustainability impacts. Emerging practice configurations illustrate the ways rules as meaning, at both the macro level institutional regulations and micro level of cultural expectations shape consumer options. Practice configurations also illuminate the ways material marketplace resources, both stagnated products and innovations, provide opportunity for variance. Finally, the competence element of practice varies between a traditional consumer culture ethos and new practices vis-a-vis consumer resourcefulness. This study provides a contribution to the link between macromarketing and consumer culture theory in the centrality of enforcement of both governmental level regulations and consumer best practices for improved environmental sustainability.

Keywords

practice theory, sustainability, product use, marine anti-fouling, consumer culture theory

The Introduction should include...

What do we know?

Provide comprehensive review of the major findings

What don't we know?

Show literature gap by giving an overview on prior key studies that have addressed the same/similar issue

Explain importance of closing the gap

What is new that I am showing with my study?

Brief summary of main findings OR

Discussion of research objective, what research aims to accomplish

Main components of Introduction

- **Introduction to the topic and why it is worth studying**
- **Research problem / question and how it is connected with the previous research**
- **The objectives and justification for the research**
- **Methodology used**
- **Main results, i.e. a brief answer to the research question**
- **How the report is structured (chapter by chapter).**

→ “Sell” your report to the reader in the introduction

Introduction usually gets its final form in the very end!

Example: Introduction

1. Problem definition

E.g.: The overall environmental impact of consumer behavior is of major concern for the current and future wellbeing of life. At the public policy level, sustainability research has focused primarily on institutional actors and systemic change efforts. At the consumer level, sustainability research has focused primarily on consumer product choice and post-use disposal.

However, theorizing consumer product use sustainability affects remains underdeveloped.

2. Research question and Objectives

RQ: how consumer practices during product use results in a wide variance in overall environmental sustainability impacts?

Aim to address this questions with ethnographic research and thorough literature review

3. Course of the Investigation (how rest of thesis is structured)

Checklist for Introduction

- **Make sure you state your research question!**
- **State your contribution at a general level**
- **Motivate the importance of your contribution – be concrete**
- **Try to have some concrete examples**
- **Provide a roadmap**

The Theoretical Background section should include

Literature Review on the most important concept(s)

- Provide an overview on most relevant articles in the field
- Define the concept(s)
- Explain how the studies are interconnected, (dis)agree with one another, leave research gaps

Example: Main Body – Theoretical Background

Theory/theoretical concept 1

Introduction, description and definition

- E.g., Sustainable consumption from product use perspective
- Specifics of product use and sustainability

Theory/theoretical concept 2

Introduction, description and definition

- E.g., Sustainable consumption and practice theory definition
- Consumption life-cycle: product acquisition and disposal

Synthesis of theoretical concepts 1 & 2

Checklist for the Theoretical Background

- **Introducing key concepts and define them**
 - It's crucial not to have too many concepts as it may make your thesis too complex or superficial. (This depends on how established your concepts are but more than 3-4 is usually too many)
- **Find a handful of studies that are the most relevant and have a conversations with them (Fewer studies rather than too many)**
- **Be respectful of the past research**
- **Rather understate (“we often find”) than overstate (“This is universal yearning of all humans”)**

The Discussion and Implications section should include

Discussion – communication of significance of the work

- Provide a crisp first paragraph in which you overview the study and its findings
- Show how your theoretical contribution can provide fresh look at past studies and suggest
- new research avenues (specific examples are more persuasive than gran claims.)

Implications

- **THEORETICAL:** Elaborate on how your findings add to and extend the different literatures most relevant to your focus
- **PRACTICE:** Derive recommendations that marketers, public policy makers in general should follow – based on your findings

Example: Discussion and Implications

- **Discussion**

What do the results “mean” that you found

- **Implications for Theory**

How does your study add to what type of prior literature

E.g., demonstrate how macro level institutional actors can affect consumer practice configuration variance during product use

- **Implications for Practitioners**

What useful recommendations can you provide to marketers, public policy makers

E.g., to bring understanding of the effects of product use to the overall sustainability of a product

Conclusion

- **Brief summary of Findings**
 - What are your key findings?
 - What conclusions can be drawn?
 - How the results are connected with current scientific discussions?
- **Limitations**
 - What questions remained open / topics for further study?
 - What new questions or viewpoints came up?
- **Avenues for Future Research**

→ Write down conclusions at the same time with introduction in the end. In this way, you can avoid overlaps. Choose different phrasing in the introduction and conclusions. Remember to be analytic!

Discussion Checklist

- **Provide a crisp first paragraph in which you overview the study and its findings**
- **Show how your theoretical contribution can provide fresh look at past studies and suggest new research avenues (specific examples are more persuasive than gran claims.)**

What to cite

Academic journals:

- **Marketing** - e.g., Journal of Marketing, Harvard Business Review, Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, Journal of Consumer Research, Marketing Science, Journal of Marketing Research, European Journal of Marketing
- **Special topics** - e.g., Journal of Advertising, Journal of Interactive Marketing, Journal of Business Ethics...
- **Marketing course text books**, doctoral dissertations, master's Theses → mainly for initial mapping of the topic

Nature of scientific text

Scientific text should report research findings and produce new knowledge

- Argumentative: convinces the reader about the validity of a claim
- Transparent: one's own and others' views or findings are distinct and certainty of information is pointed out
- New: Not just repeats old but produces new

Text proceeds logically with a clear perspective

- Concepts clearly defined and used consistently
- Text easily understandable and well written – complicated arguments and difficult concepts are not absolute values!

Reviewing the relevant literature

Main focus:

- Try to identify concepts and themes → how have they been defined and studied?
- Provide overview on findings → what kinds of findings has earlier research presented?

You should produce a critically written, essay-type review in which you bring about your own conclusions and perspectives

- Earlier research is not just repeated and summarized, it is also evaluated
- Do not list prior research findings, but show how they overlap, reach consensus, disagree, are inconclusive, leave room (gap) for more research

Example: Discussing one theme from multiple perspectives with multiple sources

Although the topic of interactivity has been widely discussed in the past 20 years there still exists variation in its conceptualization (Qin et al. 2010). Hoffman and Novak (1996) have divided the term “interactivity” into unmediated interactivity (e.g. face-to-face communication between two individuals) and mediated interactivity (e.g. communication between two individuals facilitated by a device). In this sense communication through the mobile medium represents mediated interactivity. On the other hand, the interactivity may also be related to the richness of media (Leppäniemi 2008). This assumption suggests that the greater the mediums’ ability to provide timely feedback the richer the media. The richness also varies according to different media types. In addition, it is suggested often in literature that control over the mediated environment is a key feature of interactivity and that research on the effectiveness of interactive advertising expresses the issue of user control over advertising in an online environment (Leppäniemi 2008). This interpretation realizes the “audience-driven” media environment and the significance of the audience acting as both creators and receivers of content.

Example: Clear difference between previous research and analysis

The results of this study provide several interesting insights on consumer behavior on company-hosted Facebook community pages, and especially two notable findings arise from the results. First, the findings indicate a clear distinction between the behaviors related to utilitarian and hedonic motivations to use the community page. Hedonic motivations appear to have a strong and significant relationship with contribution behavior, but a much weaker relationship with browsing behavior. Utilitarian motivations, on the other hand, have no significant relationship with contribution but are very strongly related to browsing behavior. This finding seems to offer further validation to the claim that online communities have strong instrumental value to users (Bateman et al 2010, Sanchez-Franco and Rondan-Cataluña 2010). The effect of utilitarian motivations to contribution, however, remains a mystery. The quite low proportion of respondents reporting to contribute to the community (over 91% of responses to all contribution items fell between 1-4 on

Example: meta text

3. Mobile advertising

As mentioned previously, mobile advertising is a young and fast growing phenomenon of marketing communications. With the right execution the mobile channel has the potential to benefit both advertisers and consumers (Barwise & Strong 2002). The mobile includes some unique technological features which relate to the ability to leverage other mediums (Sharma et al. 2008). However, due to its unique characteristics it should not be treated like the traditional media (Bauer et al. 2005). In addition, the interactivity of the mobile channel is assumed to differ from that of the Internet (Kannan et al. 2001; Barnes 2002). The following chapter aims to form a comprehensive picture of mobile advertising and the aspects that should be taken into consideration in order to utilize a successful mobile advertising campaign.

3.1. Defining mobile advertising

Although there are various definitions for the concept mobile advertising in both academic and industrial publications no commonly accepted definition exists (Leppäniemi et al. 2006). There are

Example: avoid (lengthy) literal quotations

Shimp (2010, 10) defined IMC as follows: *“IMC is a communications process that entails the planning, creation, integration, and implementation of diverse forms of marcom (advertisements, sales promotion, publicity releases, events, etc.) that are delivered over time to a brand’s targeted customers and prospects. IMC requires that all of the brand communication media deliver a consistent message. The IMC process further necessitates that the customer/prospect is the starting point for determining the types of messages and media that will serve best to inform, persuade, and induce action”*.

Logical structure of the report – content chapters

Use chapters to build a logical structure!

- All chapters should belong coherently together – no disconnected parts!
- Consistent hierarchy; e.g., equivalent details should fall in sub-chapters of the same level
- If you use sub-chapters, there should be at least two sub-chapters at the same level (e.g. 1 Heading, 1.1 Sub-heading, 1.2 Sub-heading)
- Write at least two text paragraphs in one (sub-)chapter

Examples of the structure

- Chronological order: previously – now – in the future
- Geographical order: from local to global
- List outline: from important to trivial, from general to specific
- Thematic structure: views the theme from various angles
- From known to unknown or from simple to complicated
- Comparative outline (opposite angles, contrasts)
- Cause – consequence outline or phenomenon – cause outline
- Problem – solution outline

Checklist for BT thesis, ask yourself:

Are you being clear?

Are you having just one story?

Have you defined all your concepts?

Are you using synonyms for core concepts? If yes, then choose one and stick with that!

Are your sentences maximum of three lines long?

Are your paragraphs maximum of ½ pages?

Are you guiding the reader with transitions between sections?

For next session

Remember to submit your research plan by 26.5. to MyCourses!

Prepare a short presentation of your research plan for the 27.5 seminar

- **Max 2 slides**
- **Should include:**
 - Research phenomenon
 - Stream(s) of research you refer to
 - Research gap
 - Research question
 - Intended contribution to research
 - Intended implications

Book an Individual meeting from MyCourses

With the same supervisor as last time!

Student	Supervisor
Tran	Olga
Emilia	
Partik	
Petteri	
Doron	
Frans	
Markus	
Roosa	Emma
Sara	
Jenni	
Iiris	
Jonni	
Lumi	
Minna	
Onni	

Emma.m.salminen@aalto.fi