

Conceptual framework.

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Source:	Salem Press Encyclopedia, 2020. 1p.
Document Type:	Article
Subject Terms:	Research methodology Data analysis
Abstract:	A conceptual framework is a research tool used to establish the fundamental structure focus, and rules of a project. It is a theoretical outline of principles, assumptions, and guidelines that is supported within a broader concept. A conceptual framework examines previous research and uses existing theories and strategies to guide current projects.
Full Text Word Count:	687
Accession Number:	129815305
Database:	Research Starters

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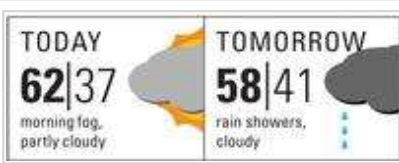
A *conceptual framework* is a research tool used to establish the fundamental structure, focus, and rules of a project. It is a theoretical outline of principles, assumptions, and guidelines that is supported within a broader concept. A conceptual framework examines previous research and uses existing theories and strategies to guide current projects.

Conceptual frameworks can be used in almost any area of theoretical development. The designs can be visual in representation, illustrating a research project's organization or primary theoretical principles. Such visual representations generally appear as standalone figures or graphics or as supplemental material at the end of a review. Another way to view a conceptual framework is in terms of the examined theory itself. For example, the framework may be defined by a researcher's exact description of his or

her theory. A third view considers the conceptual framework an interconnecting web comprising all elements of the [research process](#), including goals, opinions, contexts, settings, theory, and methods.



A conceptual framework includes opinions during the research process. pixabay



A formal hypothesis of a conceptual framework may be a prediction, such as a weather forecast. Parhamr, CC BY-SA 3.0 <<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons

Overview

In most research, conceptual framework acts as an argument to explain why the topic being studied matters. It also addresses whether the methodology used for the research is appropriate and accurate. This information is meant to convince readers of the importance and thoroughness of the research. The research questions must take into account this argument for relevance. The design of the research is also important and must be compatible with the research questions, goals, and context. Collected data must further support the conceptual framework by providing researchers with the raw material necessary for exploring each question. The researcher's analytical methods should provide a better understanding of the questions even if the data does not answer those questions.

Ideally, a conceptual framework takes into account all existing theories, findings, and contexts related to a research question. It is important that researchers review multiple disciplines to properly frame their work. This helps better identify gaps in both existing research and current research plans, which can lead to additional

questions and experiments for the project.

Another important component in designing a conceptual framework is identifying potential biases. In examining established research, reviewers may discover important questions that were overlooked. These may have been missed because of wrongful assumptions or because key data did not support a [hypothesis](#). Researcher should take an objective approach to their research, as any biases could affect the results of the project.

Conceptual frameworks can be graphic or narrative in composition. Many researchers use imagery such as graphs, charts, and illustrations to summarize previous studies. Narrative conceptual frameworks are more common despite being more difficult to navigate. Researchers employing narrative conceptual frameworks are encouraged to provide visual organization for readers in the form of bulleted points and bold and italicized texts.

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