Chapter 5

The Concluding Framework

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The Concluding Framework

1. Background

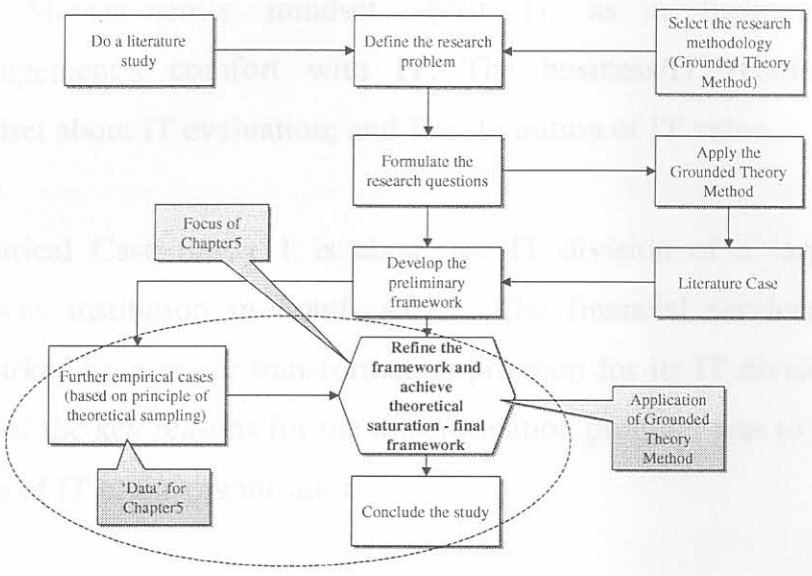
A preliminary framework, to clarify dissatisfaction with explanations of IT value, was developed in the previous chapter. The development of the preliminary framework was based on the grounded analysis of a Literature Case. This framework provides an initial understanding of the reasons why managers are not satisfied with explanations of IT value.

Chapter 5 continues with the further development and refinement of the above framework. The objective of Chapter 5 is not only to refine the preliminary framework developed in the previous chapter, but also to reach theoretical saturation amongst the categories contained in the preliminary framework. In this context, refinement means improving on and expanding the preliminary framework of Chapter 4 along the dimensions of specificity, precision and density.

A second objective of Chapter 5 is to achieve theoretical saturation of the framework. A theory or framework is saturated when: 1] it is stable in the face of new data, 2] it is rich in detail and 3] the relationships between categories are well established and validated (Strauss and Corbin, 1990: 188). The purpose and structure of Chapter 5 is shown in Figure 5.1 on the next page.

At the conclusion of Chapter 5, the work for accomplishing the overall research objective will be completed. The research objective was formulated in Chapter 3 as: **"To develop a framework which clarifies the reasons why business managers are dissatisfied with explanations of IT value."**

Figure 5.1 The Focus of Chapter 5



The Grounded Theory Method will again guide the expansion and refinement of the preliminary framework into the concluding framework. The focus of the data analysis and synthesis in Chapter 4 was on the Literature Case while two Empirical Cases will be used in Chapter 5.

2. Empirical Cases were used to refine the framework

In Chapter 3, it was explained that data for the research will be organised into three case studies. According to Pandit (1996: 3) such case studies or cases are the principal units of data in the Grounded Theory Method. Chapter 3 also elaborates on available methods of data collection, including the use of interviews.

Chapter 5 employs two empirical case studies in the pursuit of its objectives, namely to refine the preliminary framework and to reach theoretical saturation. In this process, a number of categories will receive

specific attention. The categories were selected, based on the principle of theoretical sampling, from those discussed in Chapter 4. The categories are: Management's mindset about IT as a business resource; Management's comfort with IT; The business/IT relationship; The mindset about IT evaluation; and The definition of IT value.

Empirical Case Study 1 is about the IT division of a large financial services institution in South Africa. The financial services institution embarked on a major transformation program for its IT division in 1999. One of the key reasons for the transformation program was to improve the value of IT to the organisation.

Empirical Case Study 1 consists of documentation related to the transformation program and also a number of supporting interviews. The documents were selected specifically for their explanatory power regarding the categories mentioned above. The documentation contains further discussions on and perspectives about the subject of IT value.

More specifically the Empirical Case Study 1 documents include:

- The results of a survey among some 120 senior business and IT managers regarding the importance of IT and their satisfaction about IT services/performance;
- The introduction of a company-wide Investment Appraisal process in the 2000/2001 financial year to identify IT projects which are strategic and of high value.

A number of interviews were conducted to supplement the above documents. The interviews were conducted with managers closely involved in the application of the Investment Appraisal process. The interviews concentrated *inter alia* on topics like the investment appraisal

method; the rationale for doing investment appraisals; compliance with the process; the quality of the investment appraisal results; as well as dynamics among the people involved in the investment appraisals.

Empirical Case 2 is about the role of information technology in a major public services organisation in Pretoria, South Africa. Data in Empirical Case 2 was collected by means of interviews with senior business and IT managers. The interviews focused on the topic of IT value in general. This general topic was elaborated on through a number of specific themes shown in Table 5.1 below.

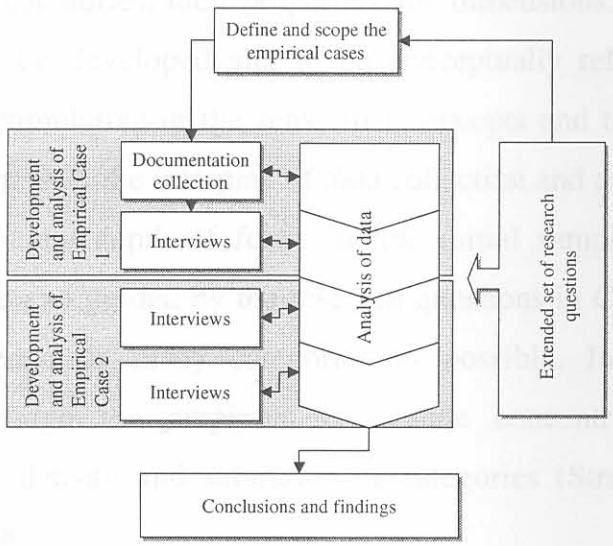
Table 5.1 Interview Themes

- Defining IT value
- Management concerns about IT
- Management's comfort with IT
- Exploiting IT as a business resource
- The Business: IT relationship
- Rationale for conducting IT evaluations
- Evaluation methods and criteria
- Performing IT evaluations
- Stakeholder dynamics around IT evaluation
- Quality of IT evaluation results
- Use of IT evaluation results
- Ability/capacity to evaluate IT
- Satisfaction with IT evaluation results

The compilation of the empirical cases proceeded in an iterative manner. For example, the documentation of Empirical Case 1 was collected and analysed. Based on the analysis, further interviews were decided upon.

Preparation of Empirical Case 2 only started when the analysis of Empirical Case 1 was basically completed. This iteration between data collection and data analysis is shown in Figure 5.2. This figure also shows how the set of extended research questions supports the data analysis process.

Figure 5.2: Iterating between data collection and data analysis



The data in the two empirical cases was, in turn, subjected to the coding processes of the grounded theory method where asking questions and making comparisons are key analysis techniques. The development of the preliminary framework enabled the further development of the set of research questions. The reason for further developing this set of research questions, originally formulated in Chapter 3, is to support data analysis.

3. Theoretical sampling guided the development of further research questions

As in Chapter 4, the analytical procedures of *questioning* and the *making of comparisons* are key to refining the components of the preliminary framework (Strauss and Corbin, 1990: 62-63).

The aim of theoretical sampling is to sample events and incidents that are indicative of categories, their properties and dimensions. This enables the categories to be developed and to be conceptually related. Theoretical sampling is cumulative in the sense that concepts and their relationships accumulate through the interplay of data collection and analysis. Sampling also increases the depth of focus. In the initial sampling, through the literature case and guided by the research questions in Chapter 3, the aim was to generate as many categories as possible. In the subsequent sampling through the empirical cases, the concentration is on the development, density and saturation of categories (Strauss and Corbin, 1990: 177-178).

Further and more specific questions are required to facilitate the sampling of the empirical cases. These questions were developed by relating the initial set of research questions, posed in Chapter 3, with the preliminary framework developed in Chapter 4. In this process, some additional and also more specific questions have been generated. The questions are shown in Table 5.2.

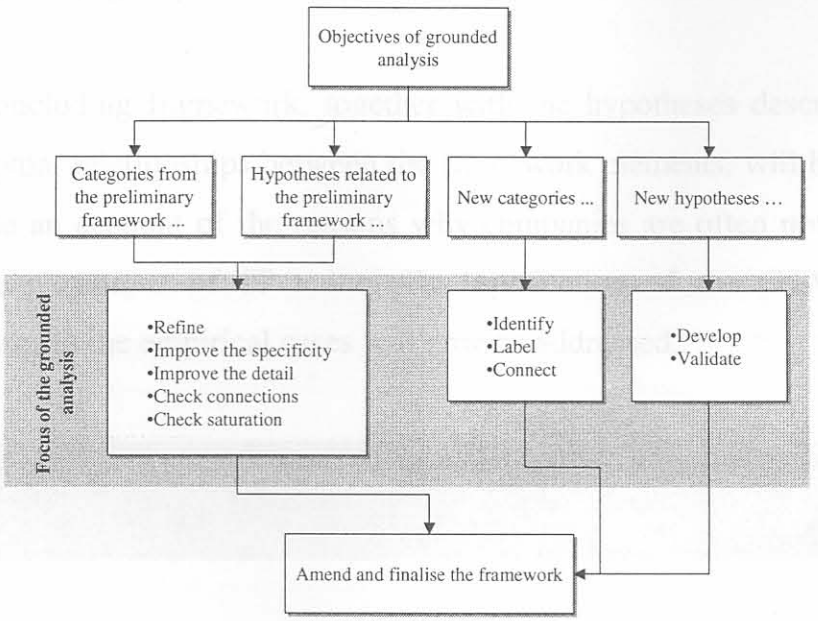
Table 5.2: Refined research questions	
Basic Research Questions (as per Chapter 3)	**Further questions derived from the preliminary framework**
What are the concerns that prompt managers to inquire about the value of IT?	• Is IT an issue for management? Why is IT an issue? • Do managers address the issue of IT value explicitly or implicitly? • Do managers have access to explanations of IT value? • What makes explanations of IT value unsatisfactory?
How do organisations in general approach the issue of IT value?	• Do organisations formally evaluate IT? • Are evaluations done ad hoc or regularly according to an evaluation program? • Who in the organisation is driving IT evaluations? • What evaluation methods are being used? • How effective are these methods?
Why is the concept of IT value so problematic for business managers?	• Do business managers have a shared understanding of the concept IT value? • What do managers mostly regard as value from IT? • How do managers think about value and specifically IT value?
How should the issue of IT's value be approached?	• What should be avoided in IT evaluation? • How would companies prefer to conduct IT evaluations? • How could companies improve IT evaluation?

This enhanced set of questions has the purpose to guide the grounded theory analysis (in other words the open, axial and selective coding) of the empirical cases.

4. Grounded theory analysis was applied to both empirical cases

The two empirical case studies were subjected to grounded analysis guided by the objectives of Chapter 5 as shown in Figure 5.3.

Figure 5.3 Objectives for the analysis for the Empirical Cases



Thus, the analysis of the empirical cases in this chapter is to generate new categories and hypotheses on the one hand, but to also further refine the labeling of available categories; as well as to refine and expand the hypotheses about the relationships between these categories.

The remainder of Chapter 5 will discuss the results of the grounded theory analysis of the two empirical cases, i.e., the results from the application of the open coding, axial coding and selective coding processes. The subsequent impact on the preliminary framework will be pointed out and discussed. The synthesis of the new and changed categories and the corresponding relationships will be presented as the concluding framework. The term 'concluding framework' is preferred to the term 'final framework'. The term 'final framework' is not appropriate, because further case studies and analysis could well result in even further adjustments and refinements. The term 'concluding framework' refers to a framework that enables the research questions to be answered in a clear and convincing way.

The concluding framework, together with the hypotheses describing the conceptual relationships between the framework elements, will be used to provide an account of the reasons why companies are often not satisfied with explanations of IT value. The application of the GTM coding processes to the empirical cases will now be addressed.

5. Open Coding was used to identify new categories and to refine existing categories

The analysis of the empirical cases was guided by the questions posed in Table 5.2. The steps in the Open Coding process (refer also to Figure 4.2) were again applied to the empirical cases. The case data was examined and analysed (using questions and making comparisons) in order to identify and label concepts. The Analysis Worksheets for the empirical cases are the same as for the Literature Case.

The above concepts were grouped into labeled categories. The categories available from the preliminary framework were used as far as possible. Where it was found that the concepts do not fit the available categories, *new* categories were formed. The new categories were subsequently further developed in terms of their properties and dimensions. The labels of the categories available from the preliminary framework were in addition validated against the concepts emerging from the empirical cases.

The process of Open Coding was applied to both empirical cases and it yielded three new categories. These are categories that are not contained in the preliminary framework and represent a potential extension of that framework. The new categories are detailed in Table 5.3:

Table 5. 3: New Categories identified through Open Coding

Category	Properties	Dimensions
Control of IT	Need (motivation)	High to low
IT evaluation capability	Strength	Poor to good
State of IT evaluation	Degree of adoption	Informal to formal

No re-labeling of the categories in the preliminary framework was required. The application of the Open Coding steps to the empirical cases showed further that theoretical saturation has been achieved in all the categories contained in the preliminary framework. This means that no significant changes have been uncovered among the properties and dimensions of the categories. The next step is to incorporate the three new categories into the framework.

6. Axial Coding was used to incorporate the newly identified categories into the framework

The Paradigm Model concept was used to incorporate the new categories (refer to Chapter 4 for more detail about the paradigm model). In Chapter 4, two Paradigm Models were developed around the core categories **'IT on the management agenda'** and **'IT evaluation process'** respectively. The Axial Coding process was applied to the empirical cases with basically two aims, the first to determine how the three new categories would relate to or fit the two previously developed Paradigm Models, while the second aim is to establish whether any core categories (and thus Paradigm Models) would result from the new categories.

The steps involved in the application of the Axial Coding process are similar to those described in Chapter 4. It was found that no new core categories were required. All three new categories could be related to the two existing core categories. The incorporation of the three new categories will now be discussed.

Each of the new categories will be dealt with individually. All the resulting changes will, however, be incorporated into the concluding paradigm models.

The first new category to be dealt with is labeled **'Control of IT'**. Application of the axial coding steps showed that the category **'Control of IT'** is related to both the core categories identified from the Literature Case. The category **'Control of IT'** was found to be in the first instance, a *consequence* of the category **'Concern about IT value'**. This relationship can be specified through the following hypothesis: *If the concern about IT value is high, then the need for control of IT will be high* (refer also to

Table 5.3 for validation of this relationship). **'Concern about IT value'** is an action/inter-action strategy in response to the core category **'IT on the management agenda'**. Ultimately **'Control of IT'** is therefore a *consequence or outcome* of core category **'IT on the management agenda'**. The new category **'Control of IT'** was thus found to be part of Paradigm Model 1.

'Control of IT' was in addition established as a *causal condition* for the other core category labeled **'IT evaluation process'** which is part of Paradigm Model 2. The relationship between **'Control of IT'** and **'IT evaluation process'** can be specified as follows: *If the need for control of IT is high, then the IT evaluation process will have to be effective.* The new category **'Control of IT'** thus serves as a component to both Paradigm Models.

The next new category is **'State of IT evaluation'**. This category could not be unambiguously related to Paradigm Model 1. The category was, however, related to the **'IT evaluation process'** which is the core category of Paradigm Model 2. **'State of IT evaluation'** was found to be a sub-category of the **'IT evaluation process'**. The **'State of IT evaluation'** is a property of the "IT evaluation process" and serves to extend the context of Paradigm Model 2. This requires that the hypothesis describing the relationship between **'IT evaluation process'** and **'Steps to enhance the IT evaluation process'** be updated to: *If the IT evaluation process is viewed to be ineffective and/or the state of IT evaluation is informal, then steps will be required to enhance the IT evaluation process.* The category **'State of IT evaluation'** is thus part of the *context* of Paradigm Model 2.

The third and last of the new categories has been labeled **'IT evaluation capability'**. This category was related through the application of the axial coding steps to the core category **'IT evaluation process'** and established as a sub-category of the **'IT evaluation process'**. As a sub-category of **'IT evaluation process'**, it forms part of the properties describing the **'IT evaluation process'**. The hypothesis, describing the relationship between **'IT evaluation process'** and **'Steps to enhance the IT evaluation process'**, can be updated as follows: *If the IT evaluation process is viewed to be ineffective and/or the state of IT evaluation is informal, and/or the IT evaluation capability is low, then steps will be required to enhance the IT evaluation process.* The category **'IT evaluation capability'** is thus part of the *context* of Paradigm Model 2.

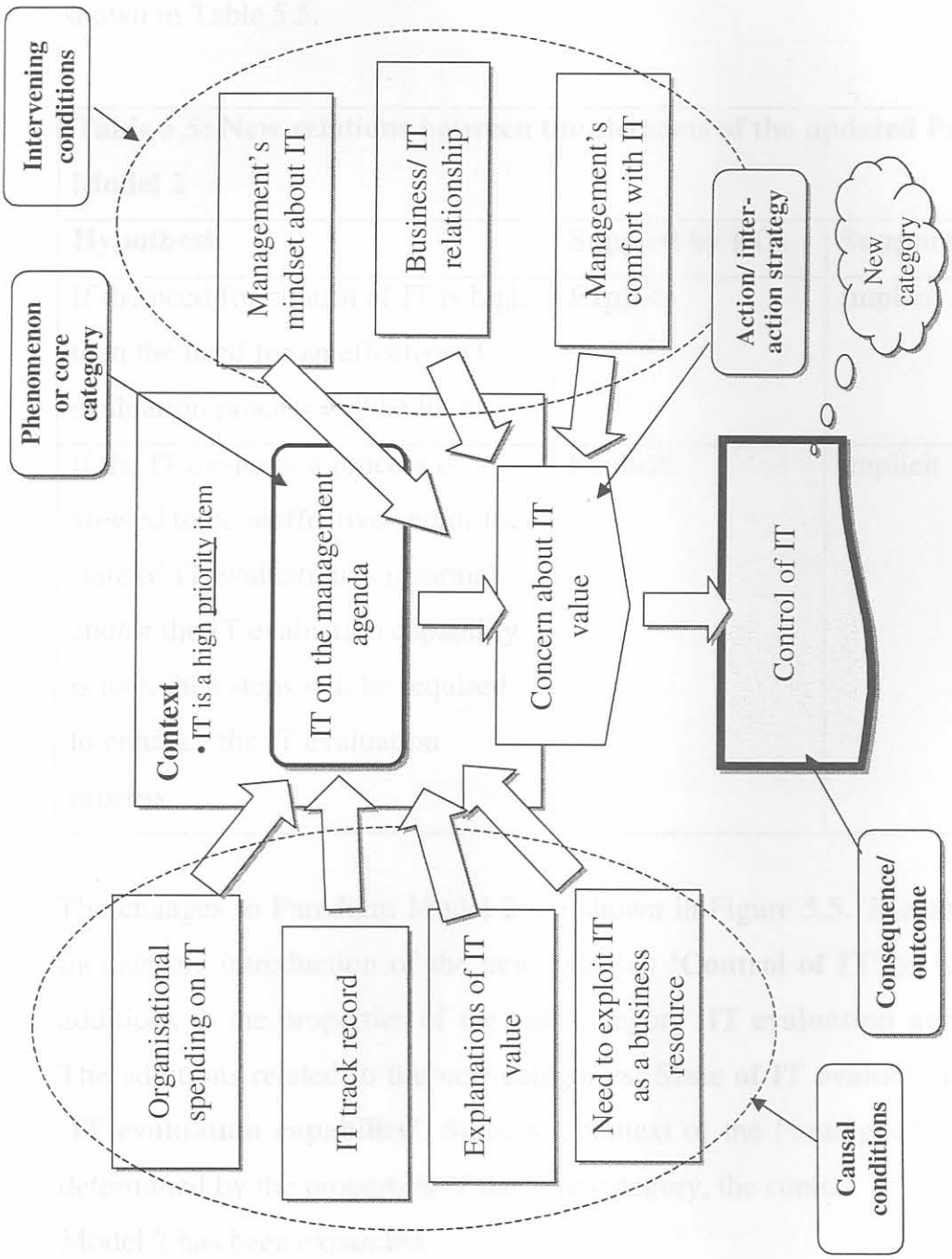
The incorporation of the three new categories into the two original paradigm models developed in Chapter 4 necessitates that some new relationships be specified and validated. The hypothesis depicting the relationships between the elements of the updated paradigm model and their validation against the empirical cases are shown in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4: New relations between the elements of the updated Paradigm Model 1

Hypothesis	Support by EC1	Support by EC2
If the concern about IT value is high, then the need for control of IT will be high.	Explicit	Implicit

The next step is to incorporate these changes into the overall Paradigm Model. These changes are depicted in Figure 5.4. It shows that the new category **'Control of IT'** is the only the change to Paradigm Model 1.

Figure 5.4 The updated Paradigm Model 1



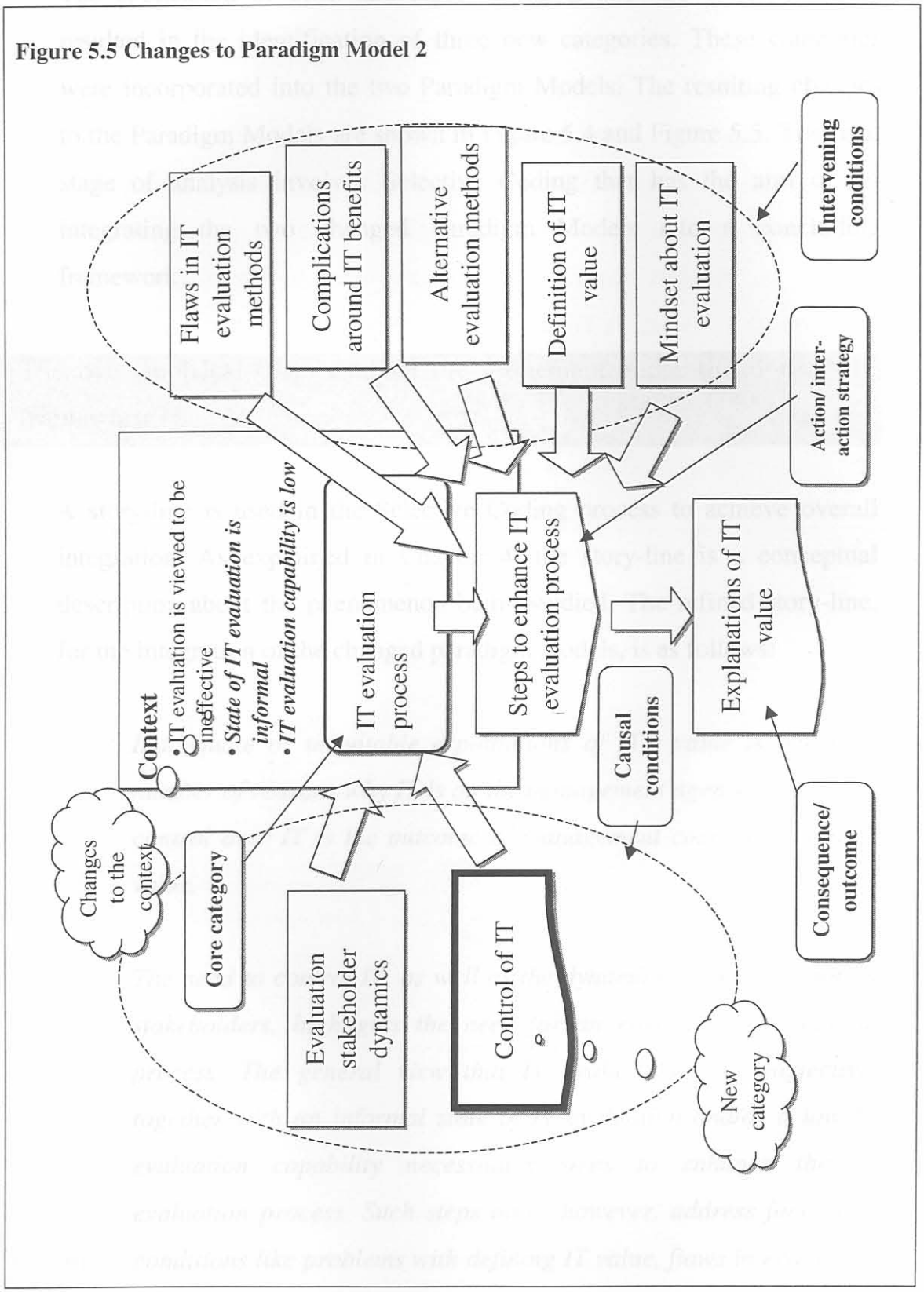
The new categories also require an update of the original Paradigm Model 2. The new hypotheses depicting the relationships between the elements of the paradigm model and their validation against the empirical cases are shown in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5: New relations between the elements of the updated Paradigm Model 2

Hypothesis	Support by EC1	Support by EC2
If the need for control of IT is high, then the need for an effective IT evaluation process will be high	Explicit	Implicit
If the IT evaluation process is viewed to be ineffective and/or the state of IT evaluation is informal, and/or the IT evaluation capability is low, then steps will be required to enhance the IT evaluation process.	Explicit	Implicit

The changes to Paradigm Model 2 are shown in Figure 5.5. The changes include the introduction of the new category **'Control of IT'** as well as additions to the properties of the core category **'IT evaluation process'**. The additions related to the new categories **'State of IT evaluation'** and **'IT evaluation capability'**. Since the context of the Paradigm Model is determined by the properties of the core category, the context of Paradigm Model 2 has been expanded.

Figure 5.5 Changes to Paradigm Model 2



The application of open and axial coding to the two empirical cases resulted in the identification of three new categories. These categories were incorporated into the two Paradigm Models. The resulting changes to the Paradigm Models are shown in Figure 5.4 and Figure 5.5. The final stage of analysis involves Selective Coding that has the aim of re-integrating the two changed Paradigm Models into a concluding framework.

7. The two empirical cases enabled the refinement and saturation of the framework

A story-line is used in the Selective Coding process to achieve overall integration. As explained in Chapter 4, the story-line is a conceptual description about the phenomenon being studied. The refined story-line, for the integration of the changed paradigm models, is as follows:

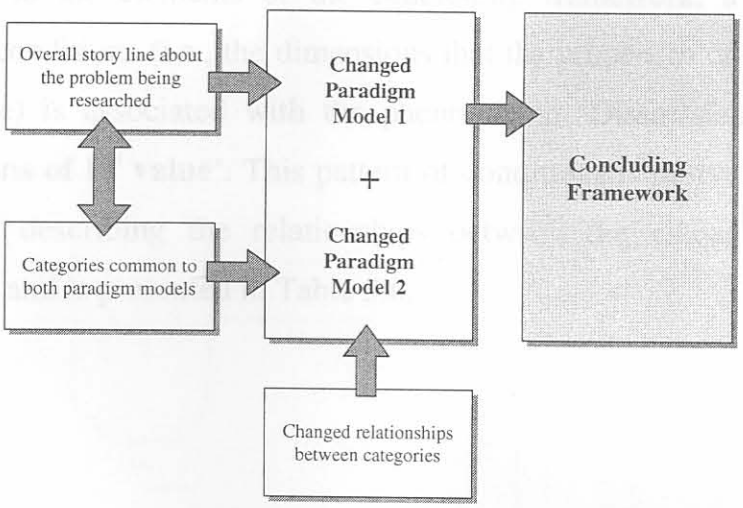
> *Inadequate or unsuitable explanations of IT's value is one of a number of reasons why IT is on the management agenda. Achieving control over IT is the outcome of management concerns about IT value.*
>
> *The need to control IT, as well as the dynamics around evaluation stakeholders, highlights the need for an effective IT evaluation process. The general view that IT evaluations are ineffective, together with an informal state of IT evaluation and/or a low IT evaluation capability necessitates steps to enhance the IT evaluation process. Such steps must, however, address factors or conditions like problems with defining IT value, flaws in evaluation methods, the mindset about IT evaluation, the availability of alternative evaluation methods and complications around IT*

benefits. These intervening conditions could make the steps to enhance the IT evaluation process less effective.

If the effectiveness of the IT evaluation process is not enhanced, then explanations of IT value will not be satisfactory. This outcome will, in turn, ensure that IT remains on the management agenda and would increase the need for control over IT as well as increasing the pressure for an effective IT evaluation process.

The two Paradigm Models were integrated around this story line. The process of integrating the two changed Paradigm Models into the concluding framework is shown in Figure 5.6. These two paradigm models show two categories that are common to both. **'Control of IT'** is, on the one hand, a consequence of concerns about IT value. It is also, on the other hand, a causal condition for an effective IT evaluation process.

Figure 5.6 Integration of the Paradigm Models



'Explanations of IT value' is the other category common to both paradigm models. It is a causal condition for **'IT on the management agenda'**, as well as the consequence of **'Steps to enhance the IT evaluation process'**. In the case where these steps are not successful, **'Explanations of IT value'** will not be satisfactory. This will in turn become a causal condition for **'IT on the management agenda'**.

The hypotheses describing the new or changed relationships between the elements of the Paradigm Models, shown in Tables 5.4 and 5.5, further facilitated the logical integration of the two models into a concluding framework. The refined and concluding framework from this study is presented in Figure 5.7 below.

According to the elements of the concluding framework, a particular pattern of conditions (i.e., the dimensions that the properties of a category can assume) is associated with the phenomenon **'Dissatisfaction with explanations of IT value'**. This pattern of conditions is derived from the hypotheses describing the relationships between the elements of the framework and is presented in Table 5.6.

Figure 5.7 The Concluding Framework shows the reasons why explanations of IT value are not satisfactory

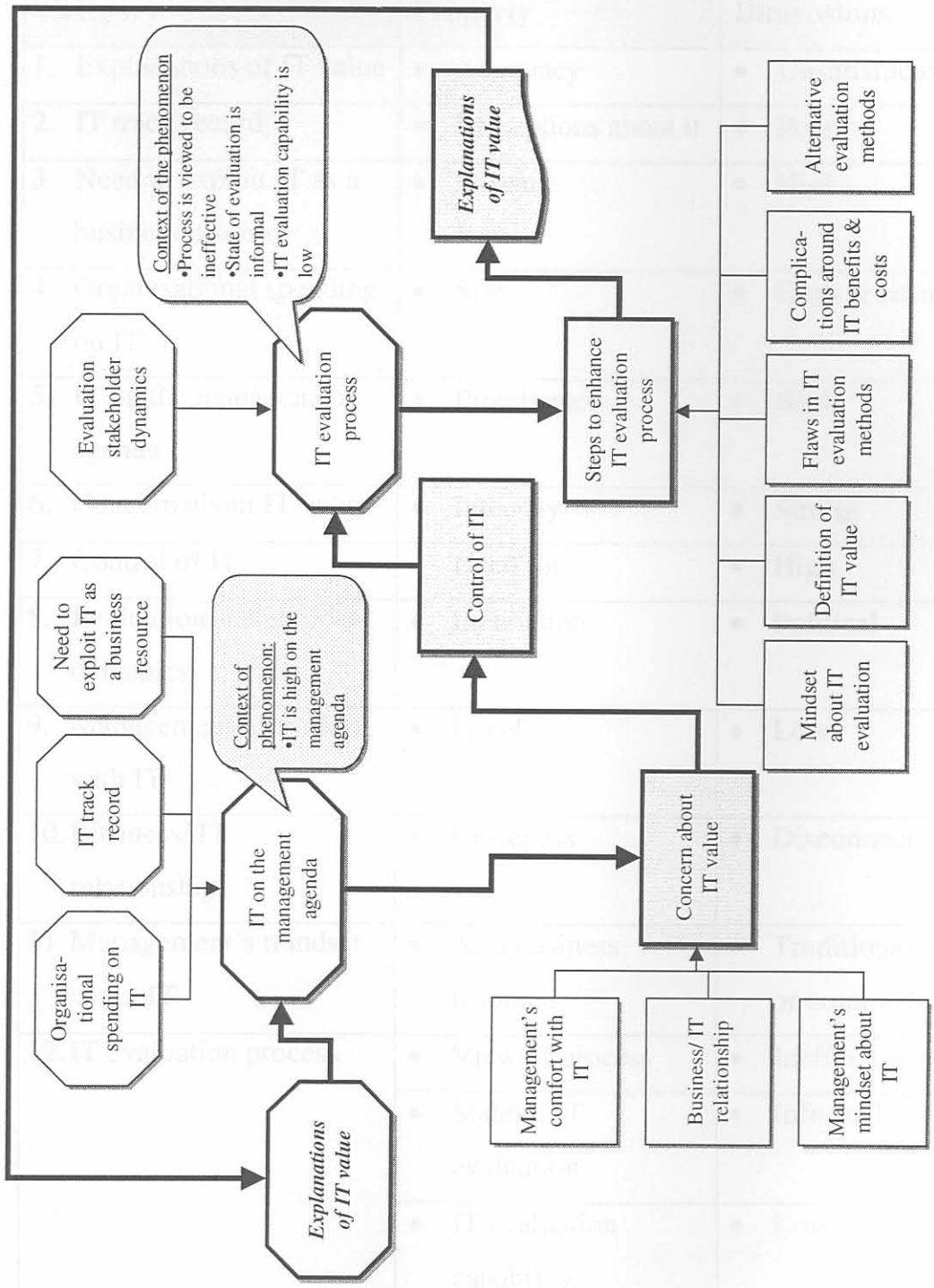


Table 5.6: The pattern of conditions associated with dissatisfaction with explanations of IT value		
Category	**Property**	**Dimensions**
1. Explanations of IT value	• Adequacy	• Unsatisfactory
2. IT track record	• Perceptions about it	• Poor
3. Need to exploit IT as a business resource	• Pressure	• High
4. Organisational spending on IT	• Size	• High & rising
5. IT on the management agenda	• Prominence	• High
6. Concern about IT value	• Intensity	• Strong
7. Control of IT	• Need for	• High
8. Evaluation stakeholder dynamics	• Inclination	• Political
9. Management's comfort with IT	• Level	• Low
10. Business/ IT relationship	• Closeness	• Disconnect
11. Management's mindset about IT	• As a business resource	• Traditional (cost or commodity)
12. IT evaluation process	• View of process	• Ineffective
	• State of IT evaluation	• Informal
	• IT evaluation capability	• Low

Table 5.6: The pattern of conditions associated with dissatisfaction with explanations of IT value		
Category	**Property**	**Dimensions**
13. Alternative evaluation methods	• Availability to implement	• Limited
14. Flaws in IT evaluation methods	• Significance	• High
15. Complications around IT benefits	• Scope	• High
16. Definition of IT value	• Agreement	• Problematic
17. Steps to enhance the IT evaluation process	• Impact	• Less effective
18. Mindset about IT evaluation	• Inclination	• Conservative

This pattern of conditions translates into a set of eighteen hypotheses that describes the relationships between the categories or elements of the concluding framework. The concluding set of hypotheses is presented in Table 5.7.

Table 5.7 The concluding set of hypotheses describing the relationships between the elements of the concluding framework	
1.	*Because of IT's poor track record, IT is on the management agenda of most companies*
2.	*IT is high on the management agenda of many companies, because of the high and rising spending on IT*
3.	*If there is pressure to exploit IT as a business resource, then IT will be high on the management agenda*

Table 5.7 The concluding set of hypotheses describing the relationships between the elements of the concluding framework
4. *If management is dissatisfied with explanations of IT value, then IT will be high on the management agenda*
5. *Because IT is high on the management agenda, management is concerned about IT value*
6. *If management's comfort with IT is low, then management's concern about IT value will be high*
7. *If the business/ IT relationship is poor, then management's concern about IT value will be high*
8. *If management's mindset about IT is traditional, then management's concern about IT value will be high*
9. *If the concern about IT value is high, then the need for control of IT will be high*
10. *If the need for control of IT is high, then the need for an effective IT evaluation process will be high*
11. *If evaluation stakeholder dynamics is political, then the need for an effective IT evaluation process will be high*
12. *If the IT evaluation process is viewed to be ineffective and/or the state of IT evaluation is informal, and/or the IT evaluation capability is low, then steps will be required to enhance the IT evaluation process*
13. *If the definition of IT value is problematic, then steps to enhance the IT evaluation process will have to address it*
14. *Because of complications around IT benefits and costs, steps to enhance the IT evaluation process will have to address it*
15. *Because of significant flaws in IT evaluation methods, steps to enhance the IT evaluation process will have to address it*
16. *If the mindset about IT evaluation is conservative, then steps to enhance the IT evaluation process will have to address it*

Table 5.7 The concluding set of hypotheses describing the relationships between the elements of the concluding framework	
17.	*If alternative evaluation methods are limited, then steps to enhance the IT evaluation process will have to address it*
18.	*If steps to enhance the IT evaluation process are not successful, then explanations of IT value will not be satisfactory*

The framework could be considered as *concluding* because …

- The new categories and additional or changed relationships from the empirical cases have been incorporated and no new categories seem to be forthcoming from the analysis of the data;
- The new relationships have been logically defined and incorporated into the relationship schedule (Table 5.7); and
- All the categories appear to have reached an acceptable level of theoretical saturation.

8. A refined description can now be presented on the reasons why explanations of IT value are not satisfactory

The initial story-line used for the integration of the adjusted Paradigm Models, can now be expanded into an explanation of the reasons why managers are dissatisfied with explanations of IT value. This explanation specifically responds to the research problem formulated in Chapter 2. The research problem was formulated as: "Why are business managers dissatisfied with explanations of IT value?"

This detailed explanation was derived from 1] the concluding framework as presented in Fig 5.7; 2] the hypotheses depicting the relationships between the categories of the preliminary framework (Table 5.7); and 3] the pattern of conditions under which the research problem could occur

(Table 5.6). The concluding description of managers' dissatisfaction with explanations of IT value is the following:

> *IT is on management's agenda due to the poor track record of IT; because organisational spending on IT is high and rising; because almost all companies need to effectively exploit IT as a business resource and because managers are dissatisfied with explanations of IT value.*
>
> *IT is, under these circumstances, on the management agenda as a high priority issue. One of the results or outcomes of IT being high on the management agenda is a concern about the value of IT.*
>
> *Management's concern about IT value is conditioned by factors such as their level of comfort with IT and IT related matters; the relationship between business and IT as well as management's mindset about IT as a business resource. The consequence of management's concern about IT value is the need for increased control of IT.*
>
> *The need for increased control of IT requires in turn an effective and credible IT evaluation process. IT evaluation processes are typically characterised as being low in effectiveness, the state of IT evaluation tend to be informal and the IT evaluation capability is low. Pressure is further exerted on the effectiveness of the IT evaluation process due to evaluation stakeholder dynamics. As a result, steps are required to enhance the effectiveness of the IT evaluation process.*

Such steps (i.e. to make the process more effective) must address these factors:

- *Available alternative IT evaluation methods;*
- *The mindset about IT evaluation;*
- *Significant flaws in almost all evaluation methods;*
- *Problems with the definition of IT value; and*
- *Complications around IT benefits and costs.*

Failure to address the above intervening conditions, separately or together, could prevent an enhanced IT evaluation process. As a consequence, explanations of IT value will not be satisfactory. This outcome will, in turn, ensure that IT remains on the management agenda and will increase the need for control of IT and subsequently add to the pressure for an effective IT evaluation process.

The framework not only responds to the research problem by clarifying why managers are dissatisfied with explanations of IT value, it also has implications for dealing with such a problem situation. These implications will be discussed in the next section.

9. The concluding framework has significant implications

The framework shows that dissatisfaction with explanations of IT value is a complex issue. Consequently simplistic, "silver bullet"-type solutions to resolve the issue will not be sufficient. A holistic or comprehensive approach is needed for sustainable solutions.

To emphasize the need for more comprehensive solutions, consider a situation where steps are needed to enhance the IT evaluation process. If

the search for alternative evaluation methods is seen as the only answer, then the required steps may not be fully effective or could even be a failure. A more comprehensive approach would require that the mindset about IT evaluation also receives attention or it could be that there is no agreed definition of IT value in place. In fact, part of the solution may be to have IT value defined in various ways to fully capture the multiple impacts of IT and the interests of all the stakeholders.

It is also evident from the concluding framework that concerns about IT value could originate from potentially related but different sources. If, for example, the concern originates from IT's poor track record, then the evaluation process should be focused on this concern and not, for instance, on the need to exploit IT as a business resource through investment in new IT systems or infrastructure. In such a case, the dynamics among the stakeholders in the evaluation process must also be managed with the real concern, i.e., IT's track record, as the main focus.

Managers must further recognise that concerns about IT value are influenced by factors like business managers' levels of comfort with IT and related matters, the relationship between business and IT or even management's mindset about IT as a business resource. Managing these factors may be enough to address the IT value concerns, without embarking on a time-consuming, expensive and difficult IT evaluation process. If an IT evaluation is still required, the process and steps to enhance the process must not loose sight of any of these factors.

It is lastly vital to note that dissatisfaction with explanations of IT value is cyclic in nature. If the evaluation process is not effective (i.e., not producing adequate IT value reports) and if steps to enhance the process are not successful, then the dissatisfaction with explanations of IT value

will increase. Previous dissatisfaction with such explanations will intensify. This in turn, will increase IT's prominence as an issue on the management agenda. Obviously concerns about explanations of IT value will increase and pressure to make IT evaluations more effective would intensify. If these cycles continue, it could result in some drastic management actions.

10. Summary

The chapter achieved its objectives to 1] refine and extend the preliminary framework and 2] to achieve theoretical saturation of the categories. This enabled a concluding framework to be developed that clarifies why explanations of IT value are often unsatisfactory. This framework was the main object of this study. The next chapter will therefore critically discuss and assess the results and findings of the study.

Chapter 6 will assess the research and the research findings. The chapter starts with considering the merit of the research problem and then proceeds to evaluate the achievement of the research objective. The appropriateness of the research method and the application thereof is dealt with next, followed by a discussion of the research results and the degree to which the research questions have been answered. The implications of the research results will further be considered and specifically its application potential. Chapter 6 will also indicate some ideas on the way forward with this particular research problem. Lastly, the specific contribution of this research work will be described and evaluated.