

**Summaries of Selected Sessions from the
2008 AMA Winter Educators' Conference
(Austin, TX)**

March 2008

**Compiled and edited by Tom J. Brown, Oklahoma State
University, tomb@okstate.edu**

1.5 Marketing Research, Technology, and Innovation (Special Session)

Multilevel Approaches to Data Analysis and Growth Modeling

Chair:

Alex R. Zablah, Oklahoma State University

Participants:

A Primer on Approaches to Handling Multilevel Data

Christian Homburg, University of Mannheim

Jan Wieseke, University of Mannheim

Multilevel Approaches to Services Climate Research

Ad de Jong, Eindhoven University of Technology

A Growth Modeling Application: Influences on Sales Team Performance Trajectories Following a CRM Technology Intervention

Michael Ahearne, University of Houston

Knowledge Sources of Trust and the Moderating Impact of Relationship Length: Cross-Category and Cross-National Investigation of Services

Shankar Ganesan, University of Arizona

Session Summary Writer: Amjad Abu ElSamen; Oklahoma State University

Homburg and Wieseke started with a quick primer on approaches to handle multilevel data. The presenters outlined the relevance of multilevel research in different areas of marketing such as cross cultural marketing, CRM, satisfaction, and branding. They presented five methodological approaches to deal with multilevel research questions: (1) survey members of one level about their perception of variables which are relevant at two or more levels, (2) collect data from two or more levels and use single informants on each level, (3) collect data from two or more levels and aggregate the datasets on the micro-level, (4) disaggregation of the datasets on the macro-level, and (5) use of hierarchical linear model (HLM). A Monte Carlo simulation revealed that these approaches can lead to different data interpretation.

After this primer, a group of papers were presented as applications of multilevel modeling. Ad de Jong developed a conceptual model of antecedents and consequences of group decision support system (GDSS) potency of boundary spanning service teams. Data were collected from 198 service employees grouped in 28 teams; the data were analyzed using HLM. The results revealed positive individual level effects of peer usage and customer influence as well as positive group level effects of competitive pressure and customer influence on GDSS potency perception. In addition, differences were observed between the within team and between team consensus about the effect of cooperation level. Finally, the results showed individual perceptions of GDSS potency relate positively to role prescribed service performance and service innovation support by individual members of the team.

Mike Ahearne continued the session with a discussion of sales team performance as an application for growth modeling. The main focus was on a salesperson's territory realignment and how it would influence his or her performance. Model temporal influence on salespersons' call productivity were built sequentially over time.

Finally, Shankar Ganesan examined the effect of goal orientation at the team level on team performance. The authors explored two facets of goal orientation (GO): learning goal orientation (LGO) and performance goal orientation (PGO). The main position was that variances in LGO and PGO reflect differences in how team members cognitively frame tasks. Moreover, teams with high levels of variance in trait LGO and PGO will perform more poorly over time whereas teams with low level of variance in trait LGO and PGO will improve performance over time. It was proposed that effects on performance will emerge over time. Data were collected using BRANDMAPS; a marketing strategy simulation.

Operating efficiency was used to measure team performance. A growth model that shows how teams change over time and shows differences in patterns of change was built using HLM. The results showed that when trait LGO follows a dispersion composition model using variances instead of mean, both LGO and PGO affect team performance. Moreover, it appears that time matters in team performance, especially when dealing with LGO and PGO.