



DONALD AND BARBARA  
ZUCKER SCHOOL *of* MEDICINE  
AT HOFSTRA/NORTHWELL

# The Distinctions Between Theory, Theoretical Framework & Conceptual Framework

Varpio, L., Paradis, E., Uijtdehaage, S., & Young, M. (2019). The Distinctions Between Theory, Theoretical Framework, and Conceptual Framework. *Academic medicine: journal of the Association of American Medical Colleges*.

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Acknowledgment: Thank you, Lauren and Sebastian!

## Conceptual Frameworks

What are they? Why do they matter?

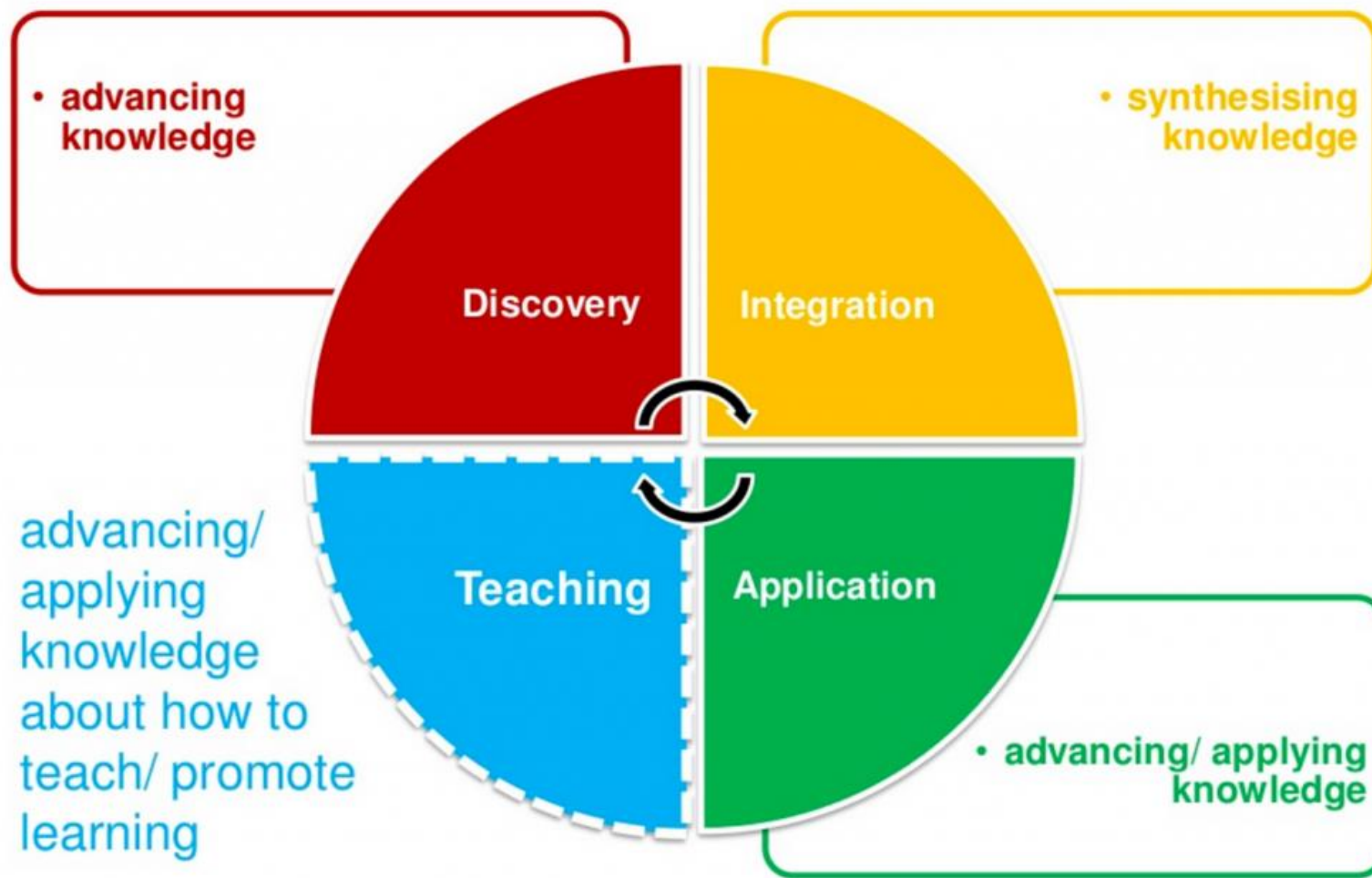
**Lauren Maggio**

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RECAP:

## Boyer (1990): Scholarship Reconsidered



Health Professions Education: Conducts Research, Explores Programs & Curricula, Teaching & Learning, and Publishes Studies/ Products


## Applications of Educational Research

### **Educational Research**

- New Knowledge
- Research Study Design
- Research questions
- Examining existing research data
- Generate Hypothesis
- Research methodology
- Apply theories
- Conclusions .....

### **Teaching and Learning**

- Local problems or needs
- Experiential learning
- Conceptual frameworks
- New Programs, Courses; Tools; Texts; Multimedia
- Evaluations and continuous improvements
- New solutions to common problems
- Best practices

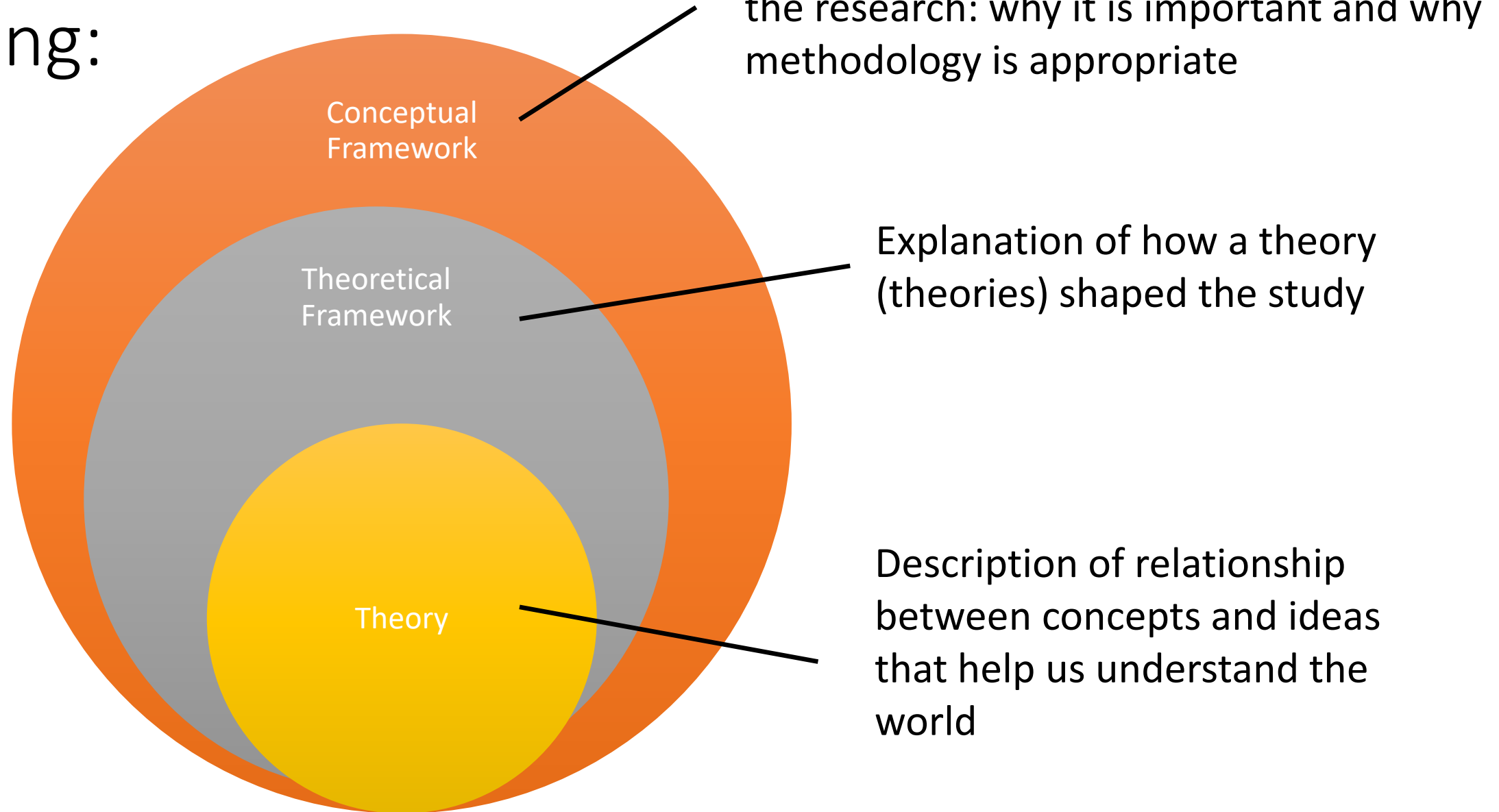


You Got to Have a  
Theory, a Theoretical  
Framework, and a  
Conceptual  
Framework!

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# Where We are Going:



# Learning Objectives and Agenda

- LWBAT define theoretical frameworks vs. conceptual frameworks
- LWBAT apply theoretical frameworks vs. conceptual frameworks to individual research interests
- Material provided:
  - Torre, D. M., Daley, B. J., Sebastian, J. L., & Elnicki, D. M. (2006). Overview of current learning theories for medical educators. The American journal of medicine, 119(10), 903-907.
- 20 min introduction
- 15 min break out groups
- 10 min collection on white board
- 10 min closing

1

Recap Boyer's  
Paradigm of  
Scholarship:  
Develop a Product

2

Framing the  
Research Process

3

Role of Hypothesis

4

Variables

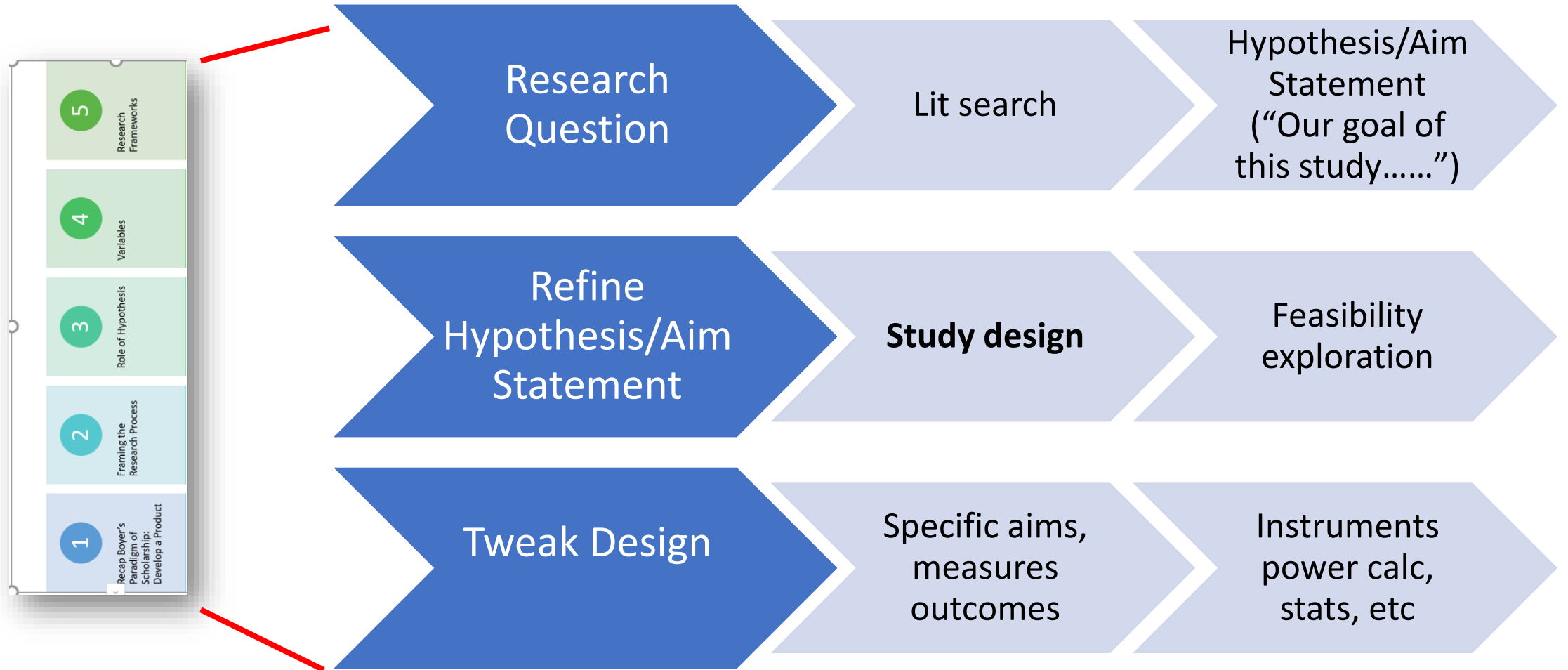
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Research &  
Thought  
Frameworks

Drawing from Boyer's Paradigm of Scholarship, identify frameworks and steps of medical education research including discussing hypotheses, variables, and structures of studies.



# The Research Process



# What are Theories?



## APM Perspectives

The Association of Professors of Medicine (APM) is the national organization of departments of internal medicine at the US medical schools and numerous affiliated teaching hospitals as represented by chairs and appointed leaders. As the official sponsor of *The American Journal of Medicine*, the association invites authors to publish commentaries on issues concerning academic internal medicine.

For the latest information about departments of internal medicine, please visit APM's website at [www.im.org/APM](http://www.im.org/APM).

## Overview of Current Learning Theories for Medical Educators

Dario M. Torre, MD, MPH,<sup>a</sup> Barbara J. Daley, PhD,<sup>b</sup> James L. Sebastian, MD,<sup>a</sup> D. Michael Elnicki, MD<sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Medical College of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, <sup>b</sup>University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, and <sup>c</sup>University of Pittsburgh Medical School, Penn.

A theory is a set of propositions that are logically related, expressing the relation(s) among several different constructs and propositions.

Abstract description of the relationships between concepts that help us to understand the world.

A theory can be supported by preliminary data or by a vast body of research—the more data supporting the theory, the stronger it becomes.

A Theory Supports the Research Process

# Theoretical Framework

A logically developed and connected set of concepts and premises—developed from one or more theories—that a researcher creates to scaffold a study.

The researcher must define any concepts and theories that will provide the grounding of the research, unite them through logical connections, and relate these concepts to the study that is being carried out.

A theoretical framework is a reflection of the *work* the researcher engages in to *use* a theory in a given study.

# Developing the Theoretical Framework

1

Identifying the  
research question



2

Researching  
literature



3

Identifying  
key theories



4

Summarizing  
the findings



# What is a conceptual framework?

A conceptual framework is coherent argument about:

- **REASON:** Why the topic you wish to study matters
- **RIGOR:** Why your research methodology is appropriate

Ravitch SM and Riggins M. *Reason & Rigor. How conceptual frameworks guide research*. Sage: 2017.

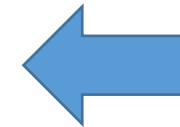
# Constructing a conceptual framework

- **Why the topic you wish to study matters**

- Problem
- Gap
- Hook

- **Why the methodology is appropriate**

- Research question
- Research design
- Methods and data to be collected
- Analytic approach

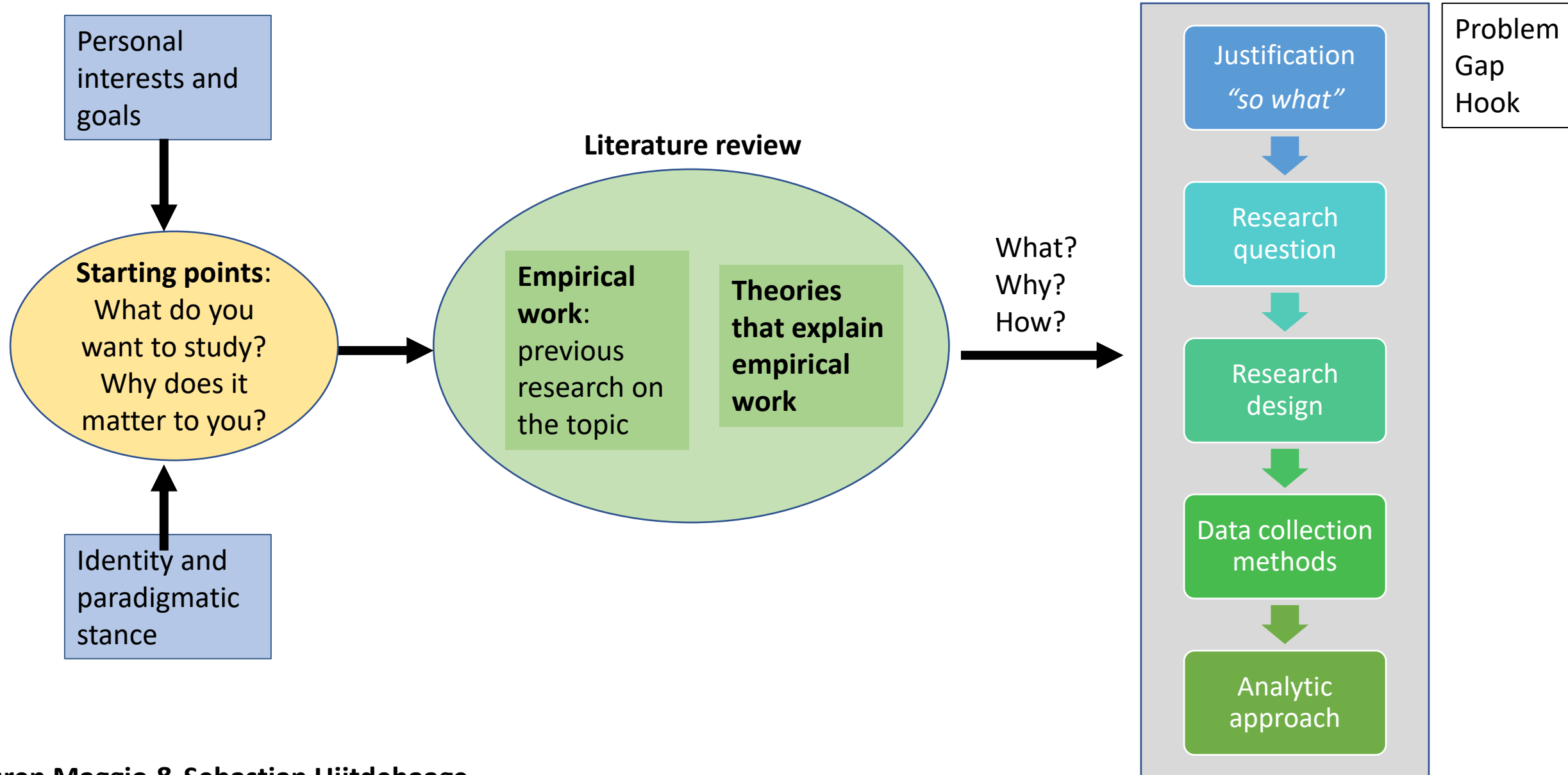


Influenced by  
your  
**paradigmatic  
stance**,  
Informed by  
**literature**, and  
guided by **theory**

# A conceptual framework is constructed by YOU

- You construct a preliminary conceptual framework **prior** to a study
- Your conceptual framework may **evolve** during a study:
- New information and ideas emerge that strengthen previous framework







## Abstract

Introduction: Emotional intelligence and communication skills are important for leading interprofessional teams in health care. We implemented a three-hour workshop for interprofessional trainees to self-assess and improve their emotional intelligence and communication skills. This report describes our experience in designing, delivering, and evaluating this workshop. **Methods:** Participants were interprofessional trainees, including Internal Medicine residents, medical students, and graduate students in clinical pharmacy, physician assistant, and health psychology training programs. This workshop consisted of reflective activities to self-assess emotional intelligence and communication styles, a didactic presentation focused on leadership skills, emotional intelligence and communication styles, and a teamwork activity on the application of emotional intelligence and communication skills. **Results:** 44 trainees participated in this workshop. After the workshop, all trainees reported increased knowledge about positive strategies to communicate with team members, felt more comfortable working with other professionals to encourage positive team dynamics, and were more prepared to encourage leadership in their interprofessional teams. Examination of learner evaluations suggested that residents endorsed higher mean ratings than the other learner groups in knowledge attainment ( $p=0.02$ ) and meeting the needs of all learners ( $p=0.01$ ). **Discussion:** This workshop enhanced our trainees' self-awareness of emotional intelligence and communication strategies. An interprofessional approach is beneficial for health professions' leadership training.

# Group Work

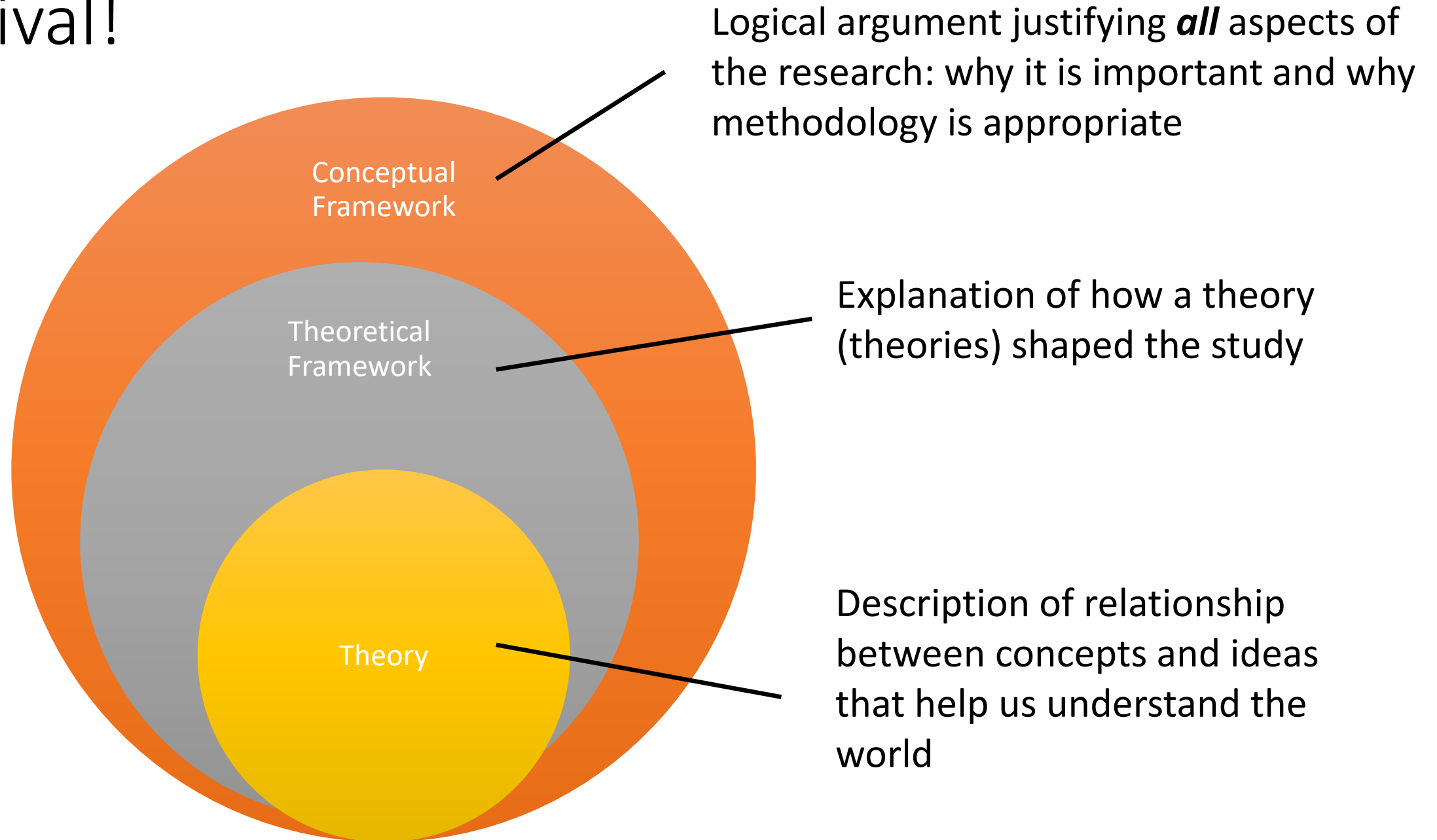
Think about a research question you have, and create a

A. Theoretical Framework and a

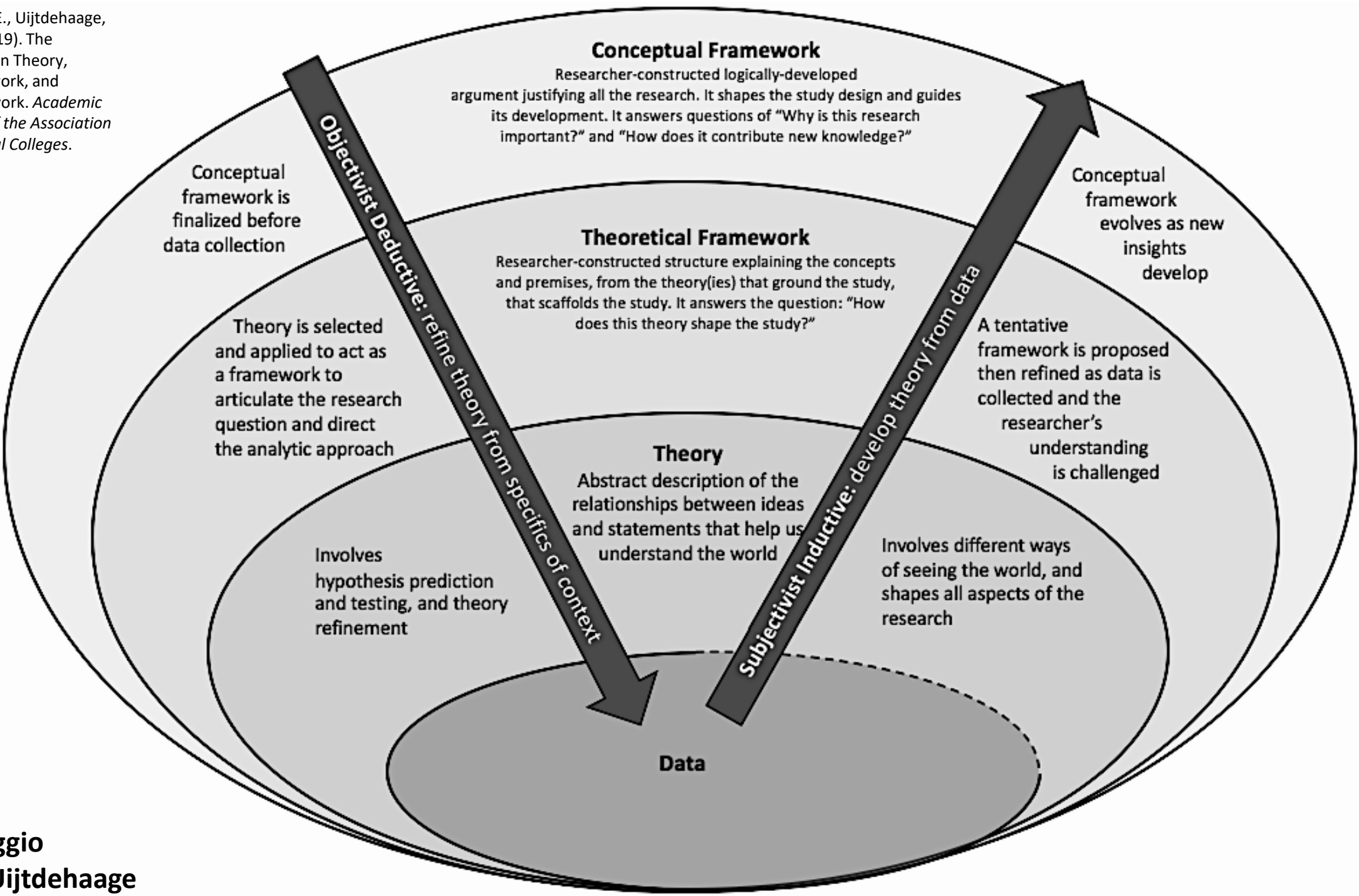
B. Conceptual Framework:

- 1) Which theories could make up your framework?
- 2) Why is your research design and method appropriate?

# Arrival!



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Thank  
you!