

## Pathway to Management Consulting Sustainability

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### ABSTRACT

*Business and corporate consulting firms in India suggest their management-consulting (MC) assesses and focuses-on their knowledge pathways. They use these in combinations to formulate new client/firm business intelligence pathways. Today, these planned client/firm business intelligence changes are often mapped towards digitally transforming the business. The MC business intelligence pathways are translated into the realizable key deliverables of business values, and new competitive intelligences. Further, when the client/firm moves towards an enhanced competitive position there is likely a sustainable change in the client/firm relationship with the MC firm.*

**Keywords:** Management Consulting, Economic, Value, Sustainability, Resource-based View, Competitive Positioning.

## 1. Introduction

The last century has been a witness to the increasing use of the phrase “management consulting”, both in the academia and in the industry. This ascent evinces curiosity and anxiety amidst linkages traversing industries, firms and functions. Together with a legion of synchronous concepts – collectiveness, strategy, ambidextrous models, data structures, governance mechanisms and cutting edge intelligent technologies – MC often brews contemporary value and reflectivity frameworks. As an aftermath of the plethora of elements, their interconnectivities and applicability’s may be a puzzle. Here, the absence of explicit understanding of how MC magnifies value creation through intelligences is the aim of this research.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 The Role of MC in Firm Environment

Executives conceive firms to create value and to capture returns from that value (Birkinshaw, Ambos, & Bouquet, 2017; Flammer & Bansal, 2017). They bring together unique resource packages to exploit marketplace opportunities (Saebi, Lien, & Foss, 2017; Stone & Deadrick, 2015) by focusing on efficiency, complementarities, repeat transactions, and novelty and transform firms into large enterprises (Chandna & Salimath, 2018; Snihur, Thomas, & Burgelman, 2018). These enterprises often hire management consultants (MCs) to: (1) optimize activities such as quality, firm structure, marketing or strategy (Herzallah, Gutierrez-Gutierrez, & Muñoz Rosas, 2017; Zollo, Minoja, & Coda, 2018), (2) professionalize personnel skill and functions, to energize deficient management styles and systems (Irwin et al., 2018; Ulrich & Dulebohn, 2015), (3) diagnose and solve problems, to recommend and implement solutions (O’Neill & Rothbard, 2015; Prior, 2016), (4) build consensus and commitment (Ateş, Tarakci, Porck, van Knippenberg, & Groenen, 2018; Gebert, Heinitz, & Buengeler, 2016), (5) facilitate and improve firm effectiveness (Bayne, Schepis, & Purchase, 2017; Ishihara & Zolkiewski, 2017), (6) implement collective intelligence for firm change (Jain, Merchant, Roy, & Ford, 2019; Woolley, Aggarwal, & Malone, 2015), and (7) legitimise corporate change among shareholders (Howell, van Beers, & Doorn, 2018; von Delft, Kortmann, Gelhard, & Pisani, 2018).

MCs advice these enterprises and may have an impact on their financial performance and on their survival (Berrada, Detemple, & Rindisbacher, 2018; Leung, Song, & Chen, 2019). MCs can also offer their services to the public sector and to the government (Maroto, Gallego, & Rubalcaba, 2016; McGivern et al., 2018). Thus, enterprises, public and governments often hire MC firms. As a result, the global consulting market has grown and market size has risen from about \$3 billion in 1980, to about \$145 billion in 2018 (Statista, 2019a).

Table 2.1 lists investigations on the connectivity's amidst MCFs and parameters, along with the context of the research (since 2008). Here, nine inquiries utilize professional skills to check specifications. Three examinations use social skills to compute particulars. But, none of these studies utilize a multi-way mediation/moderation/interaction angle of MCFs capabilities and CIs to measure different aspects of client value. Additionally, as shown in Table 2.1, a single Indian research has been administered: a case study on a single firm in rural India wanting to enhance skills with the aim towards growth.

Till date, investigations have not utilized a multi-interplay means to research links among MCFs and clients. A multi-way viewpoint employing grouped MCF capabilities, CIs, and client value input facilitates investigators to determine the associating correlations thriving amidst the MCF and the client. This technique (harmonized input among the MCF and the client with the CI interplay) encourages examination of association linkages and the likely degrees of positioning. Also, this mode provides solution to why and how either side of the linkage infers alike (or otherwise) while interacting with the MCF and their CIs. Therefore, this research aids to the gap in MCF, CI client pathway study.

Plus, this research pertains to MCFs in India. However, this research's framework is possibly relevant to many more nations, especially emerging economies and with identical firm surroundings and situations.

Table 2.1: Management consulting studies since 2008

Sl. No.	Author	Industry	Country	Method	Findings
1	(Castaldi & Giarratana)	Mgmt&public relations service firms	USA	Quantitative	As pure-service providers, diversification aids MCF's performance; performance relates positively with strategy of specific makes
2	(McGivern et al.)	Health-care	UK	Qualitative	Clandestine, political people kinetics lead to ad hoc transient handshakes, dissolving friction in the short term, while amplifying it in the long term
3	(Richter & Schröder)	MCFs	Germany	Quantitative	Capital requirements, service standardization, business risk, and organization size act as catalysts towards ownership distribution
4	(Bévort & Poulfelt)	MCFs	Denmark	Qualitative	Discussion of HRM's bureaucratic logic vs. MC's professional logic. Proposals towards challenges such as: micro-foundations of management, bureaucracy and its foils, enduring HR practices in the MCF environment, and carve a niche field to operate
5	(Boussebaa)	MCFs	Global	Qualitative	Knowledge sharing mechanisms is to be horizontally aligned as-well with the necessary conflict management processes
6	(Teo, Lakhani, Brown, & Malmi)	MCFs	Australia	Qualitative	Strategic ways of HRM that leads to performance variance
7	(Skjølvsvik & Breunig)	MCFs, Clients	Norway	Qualitative	Client's assessment of MCF's references unravelling their SME experience which

					then provides an idea of the knowledge MCs possess. Clients can then decide if this knowledge can be the starting point for their firm to build on
8	(Stumpf)	MCFs	Global	Quantitative	Promotion to partner prediction via relationship competencies: trust, collaboration, self-assessed interpersonal style
9	(Kumra)	MCFs	UK	Qualitative	Work-centred women in their pursuit of success, are to strategize with the MCF's model, engage with management to procure executive sponsorship and streamline relationship to boost their workplace networks
10	(Back, Parboteeah, & Nam)	MCFs	Global	Quantitative	Research MCF's positive/negative effect on innovation. While there is a positive influence of MCFs on innovation, factors such as property rights shield, non-replaceable product/service, weaken the MCF R&D spending relationship
11	(Heirati, Henneberg, Richter, & Harste)	Clients	German-speaking area of Germany Austria, Switzerland	Quantitative	Study the impact of social vs. economic connectivity's between MCFs and clients. Social rather than economic rapport drives stronger client MCF bondage
12	(Jaakkola)	MCFs	Finland	Qualitative	Investigate ways to convert vague offerings into orderly processes; through professionalism, standardization, and systemization
13	(Brandon-Jones, Lewis, Verma, & Walsman)	MCFs	USA	Multi-method, multi-stage	Research customer engagement levels at different levels. Both at the firm level and at the individual level and utilizing characteristics such as scale, specialization, leverage the SMEs require fewer face-to-face interactions than the generalists who supplement minimal knowledge with added interactivities
14	(Awasthy)	MCF	India	Concurrent mixed methods	A case study on a single rural MCF points to the firm aspiration to grow. To enable this vision, aspects such as leadership, systems, processes, presentation, and documentation are to be enhanced
15	(Kumra & Vinnicomb e)	MCF	UK	Qualitative	Single MCF based case study on the promotion of women as Partners. The author identifies areas of improvements as go-getting attitude with a marketing flair of accomplished assignments, and diligently align in the organization's leadership framework

## 2.2 Why India?

India is the basis of this study for a number of reasons. First, India is a developing economy, home to about 1.36 billion people which is 17.74% of the world's population (Helmerts, Patnam, & Rau, 2015; Nations, 2018). Literature calls India as one of the dominant emerging economies in the world (Heinberg, Ozkaya, & Taube, 2018). It appears to be the precise location to research emerging economy firms for the following reasons: India commands myriad of diverse conglomerates (Lin, 2016; Ramaswamy, Purkayastha, & Petitt, 2017). It also offers an environment and a launch-pad reminiscent to other emerging economies (Elango, Pattnaik, & Wieland, 2016; von Delft et al., 2018). Second, India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is slated to grow at a faster clip over the next few years (Behera, Pattanaik, & Kavediya, 2017; Rath, 2018). This could catapult it as the world's second largest economy, overtaking the United States, by 2030 (Curran, 2019). India's sovereign Westminster style framework provides individual states with a certain degree of administrative independence (Aamodt & Stensdal, 2017; Kumar, Pal, & Pal, 2018). This freedom enables these states to individually lure financing thus enabling clusters of industrial expansion (Alkon, 2018; Mukherjee, Makarius, & Stevens, 2018). These factors suggest that India is a vital driver of world fiscal growth (Prabu, Bhattacharyya, & Ray, 2016).

Third, over the last few years India has overseen significant reforms (Bahal, Raissi, & Tulin, 2018; D. Singh, Pattnaik, Gaur, & Ketencioglu, 2018). These include: (a) policy reforms such as increase in foreign direct investment (FDI) limits in different areas (Chidambaran, Krishnakumar, & Sethi, 2018; Xiao & Park, 2018), (b) trade reforms such as Make in India and Start-Up India, (c) process reforms such as Goods and Service Tax (GST) and abolishing red-tape, and (d) infrastructure reforms such as smart cities and freight hubs (Mital, Chang, Choudhary, Papa, & Pani, 2018). These measures have taken India higher, to rank 77 from the earlier 54, in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Ranking (Group, 2019).

To summarize, India is at the cusp of a major transformation (Li, 2017; Sharma & Pal, 2018). And to take advantage of the many opportunities multinational firms can make a beeline to India (Elia, Massini, & Narula, 2017; Fuller, Akinwande, & Sodini, 2017). They may need assistance to build the connectivity's (D. Singh & Delios, 2017). MCF's can not only assist with strategy but also with execution and on request, can streamline operations to deliver added value. Hence, this research investigates the different capabilities and intelligences of Indian MCFs to see if they deliver value to their clients.

## 2.3 The Indian Management Consulting Industry (IMCI)

India is home to an array of MCFs. These include home grown firms (such as TCS, Infosys) (Mahmood, Zhu, & Zaheer, 2017; Ransbotham, Kiron, Gerbert, & Reeves, 2017), strategy and operations firms (such as McKinsey, BCG) (Lorenzo & Reeves, 2018; Venkatesh, Shaw, Sykes, Wamba, & Macharia, 2017), Big 4 accounting firms (such as Deloitte, EY) (Chouhan & Naghshbandi, 2015; Nishant, Goh, & Kitchen, 2016), captive firms (such as Avanade, BDO) (Pongelli, Calabrò, & Basco, 2018; Thakur-Wernz & Bruyaka, 2017), and boutique firms (such as Erehwon, PRTM) (Ntabe, Lebel, Munson, & Santa-Eulalia, 2015). The Indian MCFs are growing in number at an average of about 6.75% per annum and is to touch \$2.5 billion in revenue by 2022. About 30% of the clients are from the BFSI space. Internationally, the IMCI growth rate is the highest at 6% exceeding the growth rates of UK (5%), and Germany (1%) (Statista, 2019b). Some of these MCFs are seeing exponential growth. For example in 2017-18, McKinsey sees double digit growth, Bain adds 2 new workplaces, and BCG which has about 20% of its total workforce in India, records the fastest growth rate among all consulting firms, and has further hiring plans (Consultancy, 2019). Thus, the IMCI growth rate is increasing and may continue to expand substantially.

Following sections introduce the MCF competitive intelligence value framework, and discuss the constructs, sub-constructs, and hypotheses.

## 2.4 Model: Management Consulting Offerings (Figure 1)

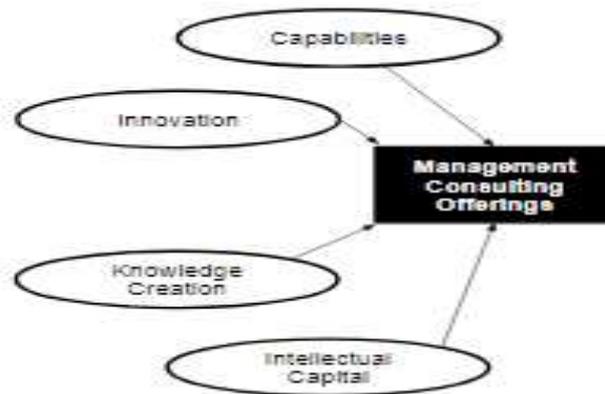


Figure 1: Management Consulting Offerings

### 2.4.1 Capabilities construct

Some authors equate capability to a firm's expertise. This proficiency can be in the form of core capabilities, enabling capabilities and supplemental capabilities. Researchers provide clarity on each dimension of capabilities. Core capabilities are often inimitable, while supplemental and enabling capabilities are replicable with the former aiding the core in its value conquest. Dimensions of capabilities can be: technical systems, managerial systems, knowledge systems, and value systems.

Thus, this study utilizes the definition of capabilities as *a firm's speciality in technology, knowledge, processes, and people*.

### 2.4.2 Innovation construct

Innovation may refer to the creation of effective service ideas (Ettlie & Rosenthal, 2011; Hsieh, Lee, & Ho, 2011). These ideas are often generated by personnel who recognize product/service failures. Dimensions of innovation typically include thinking 'outside the box', new technologies exploration, services innovation, innovative ideas, new ventures, innovation attention, innovation emphasis, and innovation measurement (Chen, Hung Tai Tsou, & Huang, 2009; Lubatkin, Simsek, Ling, & Veiga, 2006).

Hence, this research adopts Ordanini and Parasuraman's (2011) definition of services innovation as *innovation is the collaboration of knowledge and competences to offer a dynamic capability towards firm value delivery*.

### 2.4.3 Knowledge Creation (KC) construct

Researchers often view KC from different perspectives. For example, Martín-de Castro (2015) illustrates KC as collective firm intelligence through research and synergy. Lioukas, Reuer, & Zollo (2016) opines the coupling of comprehension and perception can spawn KC. Dimensions of KC include externalization, socialization, combination, and internalization.

Therefore, this investigation looks to Carnes, Xu, Sirmon, & Karadag (2019) definition of KC as *KC is the conception of novel concepts between humans through collective intelligence*.

### 2.4.4 Intellectual Capital (IC) construct

Researchers elucidate IC distinctly. Kianto, Sáenz, & Aramburu's (2017) demonstrate IC as the abstract firm worth. That is, IC is everything that is a-physical and aids firm efficiency. Alternatively, Campbell & Park (2017) view IC as the by-product of collaborative human resource reasoning. Dimensions of IC include human capital, structural capital, and relational capital.

Consequently, this research employs Nason & Wiklund (2018) definition of IC as *IC is the human intelligence quotient that drives firm economic growth*.

## 2.5 Competitive Intelligence Dimensions and Definitions (Figure 2)

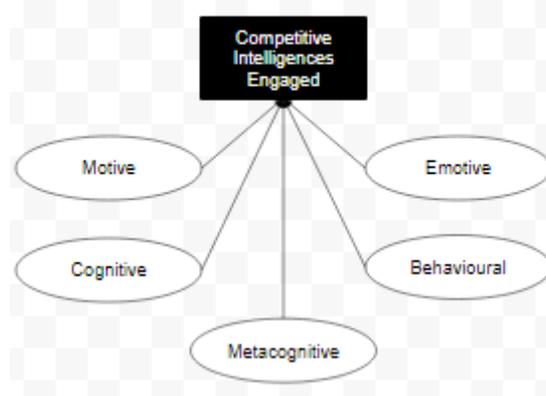


Figure 2: Competitive Intelligences Engaged

### 2.5.1 Motive construct

Motive sometimes reads as requirements fuelling gratification(Chaouali, Yahia, & Souiden, 2016; Wolf, Weiger, & Hammerschmidt, 2019). Other times, motive can be a sequence of events where mental formulations impel human character which then catalyzes productive functioning(Bagdadli & Gianecchini, 2018; Hu, Jiang, Mo, Chen, & Shi, 2016). Dimensions include character, assurance, and purpose.Hence, this research borrows Lee, Mazzei, & Kim's (2018)definition of motive as requirements that assuage desires hierarchically.

### 2.5.2 Cognitive construct

Cognitive capabilities often translate to brain action(Agarwal, Chakrabarti, Brem, & Bocken, 2018). These reflective capabilities can strongly mould an individual's thought process. Anticipation and competence are dimensions that can affect this thought process (Duarte Alonso, Kok, Sakellarios, & O'Brien, 2018). Thus, this study extends Duarte Alonso et al.'s (2018) definition of cognitive as a psychological process of acquiring and assimilating thoughts, beliefs, knowledge, and intelligence. The dimensions of cognitive as suggested in research studies (Levine, Bernard, & Nagel, 2017; Wang, Chen, & Fang, 2018)and apt for this study are solutions to complex operational observations, honest services, and redefine plans and strategies.

### 2.5.3 Meta-cognitive construct

Yan, Bjork, & Bjork(2016) utilize a priori theories to research the sources of meta-cognitive illusions and conditions for learning. Here, they conduct 5 experiments to research the effect of different types of learning on performance. Dimensions of meta-cognitive induced inductive learning are blocking and interleaving(Cho & Linderman, 2019).

Thus, different researchers investigate meta-cognitive behaviour in different ways. This study builds on Alexandra's(2018)meta-cognitive definition as a higher-order thinking that assists in comprehension, reasoning, and command over one's psychological mechanisms. Literature suggests recognition, collection, and rendering of CI to clients as frequently occurring meta-cognitive dimensions.

### 2.5.4 Behavioural construct

Behavioural intelligence captures the practical skills that can directly influence others(Johnsen, Voigt, & Corbett, 2019). It recognizes the impact emotions have on one's behaviour and on the behaviour of others(Yoo & Kim, 2017). It then uses this awareness to manage personal behaviour and relationships. Behavioural intelligence also generates visible increases in productivity, team cohesion, employee engagement, leadership performance and the ability to effectively navigate change. Hence, this study absorbs Hultman, Yeboah-Banin, & Boso's(2018) definition of behavioural intelligence as behavioural intelligence is a suite of motivators to the MC who engages it during the delivery of desired, competitive, and value enhancing outcomes for the client. Further, research suggests MC to include two dimensions (technical and people) as behavioural intelligence considerations when dealing with clients.

### 2.5.5 Emotive construct

Emotional intelligence (EI) is a person's ability to understand their own emotions and to recognize the emotions of others(Xie, Bagozzi, & Grønhaug, 2019). EI builds a person's recognition, understanding,

and emotional awareness(Septianto, An, Chiew, Paramita, & Tanudharma, 2019). It provides insight into the person, and so exercises empathy towards the perceived emotional experiences of others(Ou & Verhoef, 2017).

Drawing on the work of (Koronaki, Kyrousi, & Panigyrakis, 2018), this research defines EI as the competence to perceive, interpret, manage, and influence self and other's emotions. EI deals with both emotions and emotional content. EI dimensions as applicable to this research are, EI: captures emotionality itself; the facilitation and inhibition of emotional information flow; and taps into specialized neural mechanisms(Pluut, Ilies, Curşeu, & Liu, 2018; J. Singh, Brady, Arnold, & Brown, 2017).

## 2.6 Client Values Deliverance Dimensions and Definitions (Figure 3)

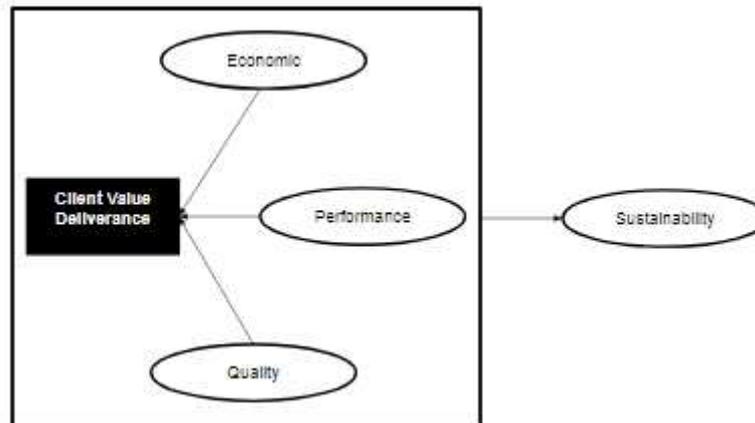


Figure 3: Client Value Deliverance

### 2.6.1 Economic value construct

Dimensions of economic value typically include return on investment (ROI), return on assets (ROA), return on sales (ROS), fixed asset turnover (FATURN), operating income on assets, market share, customer retention, profitability, market value and Tobin's Q, (Sobol & Klein, 2009; Tippins & Sohi, 2003).

As a result, this research adopts Spanos and Lioukas's(2001)definition of economic value as being a *two dimensional reflection of firm values i.e. (1) sales volume, growth in sales, market share, and growth (external firm accomplishments), and, (2) profitability (internal firm economic rents stemming from its strategic activities) such as ROA, profit, ROI, ROS, and net profit(Geletkanycz & Boyd, 2011; Sobol & Klein, 2009).*

### 2.6.2 Performance value construct

Dimensions of performance value typically include efficiency, effectiveness, equity, cost-efficiency, risk, debt, research and development expenditures as a percentage of sales, after-tax return on total sales, after-tax return on total assets (Dibrell, Davis, & Danskin, 2005; Karwan & Markland, 2006).

This study adopts Cannon et al. (2010) definition of performance value as *performance value articulates links between a firms' inputs and outcomes and focuses on governing these factors to achieve the firm's strategic objectives.* The four most broadly used performance value dimensions are efficiency, effectiveness, productivity, and flexibility (De Leeuw & Van den Berg, 2011; Karwan & Markland, 2006).

### 2.6.3 Quality value construct

Generally, service quality relates quality of service with customer expectations. Dimensions of service quality typically include reliability, responsiveness, competence, access, courtesy, communication, credibility, security, understanding/knowing the customer, and tangibles (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1985, 1988).

Five most obvious service quality dimensions are: tangibles (appearance of personnel), reliability (accurate service), responsiveness (prompt service), assurance (courteous service), and empathy (individualized customer attention) (Parasuraman, 2000; Parasuraman et al., 1988; Wells, Valacich, & Hess, 2011; Zeithaml, Parasuraman, & Malhotra, 2002).

Therefore, this research adopts Kaltcheva et al.'s (2012) definition of service quality as *service quality enables a firm to strategically measure the degree of fulfilment of customer needs while remaining economically competitive*.

#### 2.6.4 Sustainability construct

Researchers treat sustainability uniquely. Villena & Gioia(2018)note sustainability as the way firms utilize diverse resources to ensure long term economic viability.Barnett, Darnall, & Husted's(2015)view sustainability from a strategic lens. Here, firms formulate vision, mission and often have audacious goals(Goebel, Reuter, Pibernik, Sichtmann, & Bals, 2018). To achieve these continual objectives firms: (1) augment assets, (2) enhance stature, (3) maintain fiscal discipline, and (4) follow governmental norms. Dimensions include service delivery, value for money, and business growth.

Thus, this study embraces Whelan & Fink's(2016)definition of sustainability as sustainability streamlines strategy and operations to deliver long-term reflective value proposition.

## 2.7 Theoretical Background and Hypotheses Development

### 2.7.1 Theory

The theoretical model evokes resource-based view (RBV) research (Ketokivi, 2016; Klier, Schwens, Zapkau, & Dikova, 2017; Postrel, 2018). That is, it determines a firm's strategic internal resources that can produce a value blueprint (J. Barney, 1991). This can be done by delving into the two fragments of firm connectivity's: capabilities (Martin, Javalgi, & Ciravegna, 2018) and value (Popli, Ladkani, & Gaur, 2017). Correspondingly, this research formulates competencies into 2 constructs: management consulting capabilities (MCC) and competitive intelligences engaged (CIE).

MCC, points to the heterogeneous firm resources that are valuable(Hitt, Carnes, & Xu, 2016). MCF's human resources graduate from top business schools from India/abroad and can be a cause of intangible value(Gao, Zuzul, Jones, & Khanna, 2017). These MCs are part of unique strategy/infrastructure practices, breathe cutting edge innovation, and possess efficient and effective performance traits that may not be won in a short span(Shan, Song, & Ju, 2016). Additionally, MCs are much sought after in the competitive service industry. In some firms they function as internal strategy consultants while in many others they are part of professional services. Thus, these MCs are sparse in-comparison with the market requirement. Next, CIE refers to MC's CIs. MCF's normally train human resources on firm specific historic cognitive and meta-cognitive ability, causal motivation, emotional intelligence, and social and behavioural attributes which can be formidable to imitate (J. B. Barney & Mackey, 2016) and to substitute (Chuang, Jackson, & Jiang, 2016).

Finally, value indicates client's capacity to harness MC's capability to produce unique firm specific values such as economic, performance, quality, service, satisfaction, trust, and loyalty. Thus, this research has its theoretical foundations on the RBV concept and focuses on a firm's valuable, rare, inimitable, non-substitutable resources which engage distinct CIs such as motive, cognitive, meta-cognitive, emotional, and behavioural to deliver client values and thereby outperform competition.

### 2.7.2 Hypotheses

Firms bring together unique resource packages to exploit marketplace opportunities typically focusing on efficiency, complementarities, repeat transactions, and novelty(Hong, Wang, & Kafourous, 2015). These may be operationalized in a firm setting under existing firm functions. Here, firm functions may include operational improvements, innovations, customization, and cooperation. Such ideas and approaches are in use in the firm context to demonstrate close buyer-supplier ties, high uncertainty avoidance, and collectivism (Barrick, Thurgood, Smith, & Courtright, 2015).

Strategic firm value is often enhanced when firms tap into CIs for research and development (InnoCentive), innovation (Netflix), market research (Affinova), and forecasting (Intrade) (Bonabeau, 2009). These firms may engage MCFs to advance their intelligences and so provide rationalized signalling and/or reasoning for futuristic plans. Such approaches grow market opportunities, build image, and create sounding boards for managers (Bergh & Gibbons, 2011). Firm value includes key customer related constructs such as economic profit, performance value, quality value, and service value.

### 2.7.3 *The Influence of MCF on CV*

The CV construct establishes a structure where seven MCF offerings interact to deliver sustainable client value. CV may refer to tangible assets (e.g., profit) enhancing monetary value. It can also relate to intangible assets (e.g., reputation) influencing customer loyalty (Boyd, Bergh, & Ketchen, 2010). Customers recognize value in low prices, speedy response, premium service, and high quality (Zott, Amit, & Massa, 2011). MCFs may deliver these values engaging CIs. MCFs recognize the firm-customer dependency and formulate strategies that drive firm growth while enhancing customer satisfaction.

In such demanding environments firms renew customer focus and attempt to meet demands such as higher profitability, higher quality for lower prices, increase in performance, and providing world class service support (Hoskisson, Gambeta, Green, & Li, 2018). This sometimes leads to hypercompetitive environment where firms compete on multi-levels and operate to enhance market share and maximise profit. They may require advice on the above parameters for effective decision-making, necessitating the engagement of MCF. Thus, the MCF's charter is to improve the value proposition, and to enhance the competitive advantage of the client. This leads to the following hypothesis:

**H<sub>1</sub>: In the Indian context, the capabilities of the MCF collectively influence the CV deliverance**

### 2.7.4 *The Influence of MCF on CI*

This study explores these CIs of MCFs and investigates how they collectively solve complex client problems. It researches each of the CI and how every one of them enable MCFs. CIs for MCFs may be considered as a function of five constructs (motive, cognitive, meta-cognitive, behavioural, and emotive).

Van Dyne and Ang (2008) suggest the five firm intelligence constructs enhance client outcomes. First, motivational intelligence provides the drive and self-confidence to review the client's strategy. Second, cognitive intelligence provides knowledge of the client's basic purpose and values. Third, meta-cognitive intelligence formulates the intelligences into environmental analysis, diagnostics, and decisions. Fourth, emotional intelligence guides the goal-setting process. Here, it defines policies, objectives, measures, scorecards, and communication mechanisms. Fifth, behavioural intelligence builds the structure, leadership, enables budgetary provisions and formulates review and evaluation mechanisms. This leads to the following hypothesis:

**H<sub>2</sub>: In the Indian context, the CIs collectively affect the MCF offerings**

### 2.7.5 *The influence of CI on the MCF CV relationship*

The success of a MCF's CI deployment within a client's digital environment can also be gauged by digitally tracking consumers as they interface with the client. Automated tracking tools (Hamilton & Tee, 2013; 2015; Cassidy & Hamilton, 2016), offer CI approaches that can extend to mobile devices (Kim et al., 2016). Such MCF actions often deliver competitive digital outcomes to the client.

These in turn influence the client value whose measures are economic value, performance value, quality value, service value, and their influence on customer satisfaction. To deliver enhanced value, clients may engage MCFs. MCFs apply their CIs (motive, cognitive, meta-cognitive, behavioural, and emotive) to the client and deliver added value. Hence, the study investigates the influence of MCF processes and explains how various CIs affect the relationship between MCFs and CVs. This leads to the following hypothesis:

**H<sub>3</sub>: In the Indian context, the CIs collectively affect the CV deliverance**

**H<sub>4</sub>: In the Indian context, the CIs moderate or mediate the MCF CV relationship**

## 3. Conceptual Framework

The relationships in the MCF, CIs, CVs domains and the hypotheses pertaining to these domains are shown in this research's conceptual framework (Figure 4):

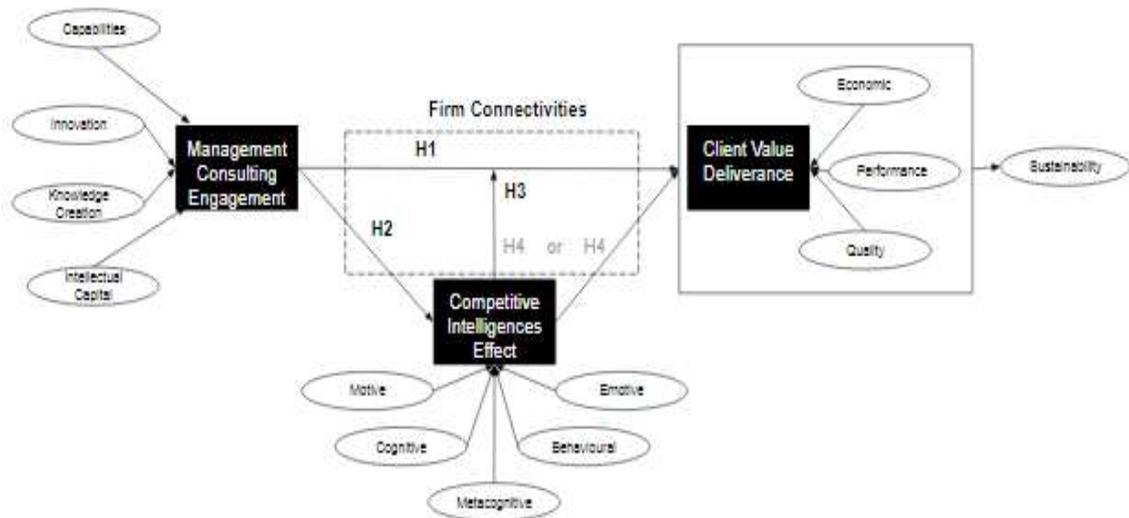


Figure 4: Conceptual Framework

As shown in Figure 4, the first hypothesis demonstrates the influence of MCF offerings on CV deliverance. The second hypothesis presents the influence of CIs on MCF offerings. The third hypothesis exhibits the influence of CIs on the MCF CV relationship.

There are four constructs supporting the MCF offerings construct. These constructs may impact each other and affect other constructs in the MCF domain. The seven constructs are: capabilities, innovation, knowledge creation, and intellectual capital.

The five CI constructs are as follows: the motivational characteristics of MCs, the cognitive thought process of MCs, the meta-cognitive reasoning of MCs, the behavioural feature of MCs, and the emotional trait of MCs.

The four CV interaction constructs are: the economic indicator of the client, the performance index of the client, the service gauge of the client, the quality meter of the client, and the sustainability reflectivity perception of the client.

The firm connectivity's block displays the impact of MCF domain on CV domain (H1), the effect of CIs on MCFs (H2), the impact of CIs on the MCF CV relationship (H3, H4). Here, constructs in their domains can impact each other and these probable correlations are the main concern of this research.

#### 4. Research Design

Multiple methods can be utilized synchronously in a single study (Ahmed & Sil, 2012; D. T. Campbell & Fiske, 1959). This approach would be less prone to built-in errors and thus preferable to single method research (Brewer & Hunter, 1989). Thus, this study avails multi-methodology. Specifically, mixed-methods research (MMR) strategy is utilized.

MMR often provides distinct perspectives. These 'pragmatic' viewpoints focus on research effect and utilize multiple methods for data collection. This archetype has its ontology in single and multiple phenomena's. Here, investigators test hypotheses to present varying results. The epistemology of the hypotheses exists on the method feasibility. This paradigm compiles and combines both quantitative and qualitative data (QQD) (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

The epistemological foundation establishes MMR as a discrete proposition. Creswell & Plano Clark (2011) define MMR as: an anti-dualistic, merging philosophy which combines at least one quantitative

and one qualitative component. Here, the research question drives MMR strategy. This approach combines QQD collection, analysis, interpretation techniques. First, the design compiles and evaluates quantitative data. Subsequently, the study analyses and interprets qualitative data. This MMR sequence aids in superior quantitative data insight. Hence, this study adopts MMR and synthesizes both quantitative and qualitative strand.

Bryman (2011) argues MMR: enriches the primary research technique by another, very different, technique; innovates the conceptual framework through triangulation; cultivates context definitive instruments; combines inductive, deductive cognition and contemplation; reduces researcher personal bias to deliver comprehensive analysis of phenomena.

This study seeks answers to the research question: 'how MC firms engage CIs that deliver added value(s) to client(s)' in the Indian context.

The quantitative element of the study researches the CI connectivity's between MC capabilities and CV; whilst the study's qualitative investigations triangulate the discovery of the quantitative research and create supplementary confirmation to show MC capabilities deliver CV.

This study utilizes explanatory sequential design within the MMR. This approach sequentially combines the quantitative and qualitative evidence to further investigate the research question. Quantitative data compilation and reasoning is followed by a separate qualitative data collection and analysis.

The quantitative section investigates how MC's use their capabilities, develop a set of deployable CIs, and how these deliver a new set of CVs. The qualitative inquiries triangulate the quantitative questionnaire findings to establish further testimony and show the MC capabilities that do deliver increased CV.

Here, both quantitative and qualitative data are sought from MC's. The unit of analysis in this research is an MC firm. MCs assess if firm always delivers client value, and if client always seeks value from firm.

## 5. Conclusion

Business and corporate consulting firms in India suggest their management-consulting (MC) assesses and focuses-on their knowledge pathways. They use these in combinations to formulate new client/firm business intelligence pathways. Today, these planned client/firm business intelligence changes are often mapped towards digitally transforming the business.

This literature developed study proposes to assess the MC business intelligence pathways as realizable key deliverables of business values, and new competitive intelligences. Further, as the client/firm moves towards an enhanced competitive position, there is likely a sustainable change in the client/firm's relationship with the MC firm. Thus, this study uses sustainability as the dependent outcome construct for the proposed MC business model.

This MC study has applicability within both academia and industry when the client/firm seeks a MC firm's assistance to advance it towards a business competitiveness repositioning. Future plans include testing the dimensions and the model on the MC population in India. To examine the hypotheses, and to describe the correlation mechanisms, this research administers both quantitative and qualitative investigations. The quantitative research aspires to examine the hypotheses, and to exhibit the different probable association paths via statistical study.

The statistical results are then triangulated with the qualitative results using semi-structured interviews with many respondent MCs who indicate their agreement to be interviewed. The qualitative research also aims to describe further associations that occur in, across and between: the MCF domain, the outcomes CV domain, and the intermediate or mediating CIs domain.

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### Author Backgrounds

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