

The Retailing Literature as a Basis for Franchising Research: Using Intellectual Structure to Advance Theory[☆]

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Abstract

This study evaluates the foundational intellectual structure of franchising research over the last four decades. Based on 1718 articles from a sample of 40 journals, we use co-citation analysis, employed in both multidimensional scaling and hierarchical cluster analysis, to evaluate 67,073 citations and determine the theoretical underpinnings of franchising research. As the results indicate, the retailing literature has had an integral influence on studies related to franchising. To advance this research domain, we develop a three-dimensional typology (franchise structure, consumer exchange, and strategic intention) based on established and emergent franchise-related topics. The typology indicates six suggested topics for examination to advance franchising research based on the domain's accomplishments to date.

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Introduction

For the past forty years, franchising has received considerable attention from researchers in varied fields such as marketing (e.g., Agrawal and Lal 1995), management (e.g., Carney and Gedajlovic 1991), law (e.g., Hadfield 1990), and economics (e.g., Martin 1988). This widespread interest is not surprising given the increased economic importance of franchising. From 2001 to 2009, the number of franchised establishments in the United States (US) grew from 767,483 to 883,292 – a 15 percent increase in 9 years (International Franchise Association 2008, 2009). Further, in 2009, the franchising sector provided over 9.5 million jobs and contributed nearly \$845 billion of economic output to the US economy (International Franchise Association

2009). Thus, the significance of franchising is substantial to both researchers and practitioners alike.

Over the years, many facets of franchising research have been examined. For example, topics studied have included contractual arrangements (Agrawal and Lal 1995; Mitsuhashi, Shane, and Sine 2008), pricing strategies (Desai and Srinivasan 1995, 1996), franchised chain advertising (Desai 1997; Michael 1999), franchise system ownership patterns (Lafontaine and Kaufmann 1994; Windsperger and Dant 2006), territorial encroachment implications (Kalnins 2004b), and franchise system internationalization (Dant, Perrigot, and Cliquet 2008; McIntyre and Huszagh 1995). As a result of such efforts, considerable knowledge has been developed, but there has not been a thorough evaluation of the domain's underlying theoretical tenets to date. Therefore, to facilitate the continued development of franchising research, a rigorous examination of its foundational intellectual structure is required.

Recent studies have suggested that franchising research is based – at least in part – on the retailing literature. The context involving both the retailer and the manufacturer in a dyadic channel relationship resembles many contractual and compensatory issues franchisees and franchisors must resolve in a franchise system (Iyer and Villas-Boas 2003). This distinction demonstrates the importance of both business format franchises and

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product or trade name franchises (Combs, Ketchen, and Hoover 2004). By relating the franchising concept to the distribution of both intellectual property forms, this approach is a clear indication of the interrelated nature of franchising and retailing research. Based on this, it is expected that an intellectual structure evaluation of franchising includes influences from the retailing literature.

Still, even if an assessment of the most influential works in franchising research resembles some facets of the retailing literature, this nonetheless provides a substantive premise to develop future research (Kuhn 1996; Yadav 2010). Based on the bibliometric analysis of co-citation data (e.g., Acedo, Barroso, and Galan 2006; Ramos-Rodríguez and Ruíz-Navarro 2004; Schildt, Zahra, and Sillanpää 2006), this approach enables scholars to perform research on the influential topics in franchising with an increased quantitative sophistication to supplement commonly-based qualitative reviews. Such quantitative examination allows for a better understanding of the theoretical bridges that can be built between intellectual topics. In addition, the identification of missing or understudied theoretical foundations can help advance the franchising research in ways not fully explored to date.

Previous franchising and retailing research has used many techniques to synthesize its empirical and theoretical domains, identify state-of-the-art research, and suggest avenues for future research (e.g., Brown and Dant 2008; Combs, Michael, and Castrogiovanni 2004; Dant 2008; Elango and Fried 1997; Fulop and Forward 1997). Recent studies have expanded the domain of franchising into the entrepreneurship and social venture literatures (Kaufmann and Dant 1999; Tracey and Jarvis 2007). Though this is integral for the widespread examination of franchising, an overriding imperative is to synthesize the fundamental tenets of franchising research and establish a research agenda requiring future investigation.

As a significant step toward this goal, our analysis contributes to the advancement of franchising research by applying bibliometric principles to investigate the interrelationships of its most influential research topics (Dant and Brown 2009; Garfield 1979; McCain 1990; Small 1980). The complexity and rigor of this analysis is considerable given the four decades of longitudinal data used. Specifically, this study provides three essential contributions. First, the intellectual structure of the franchising domain is established. Second, important emergent research trends are discussed to indicate the dynamism of the franchising topic. Third, a typology is advanced which integrates the established and emergent themes in franchising research and provides suggestions for the domain's future development.

Aligning with the focus of this special issue, we view franchising research as examining the different aspects of franchise systems throughout their evolution. Based on this perspective, there are many factors driving a franchise system. Branding (Ailawadi and Harlam 2004; Barthélemy 2008; Stern 1967), distribution (Day and Wensley 1983; Hunt 1972; Srinivasan 2006), and contractual ownership (Caves and Murphy 1976; Windsperger and Dant 2006) are among the leading topics examining this domain. We draw from these distinct perspectives to develop a framework specific to franchising for subsequent stud-

ies. Next, we discuss social network theory as our theoretical basis for the intellectual structure analyses. Then, we introduce multidimensional scaling (MDS) and hierarchical cluster analysis (HCA) as the co-citation methods used. Subsequently, the study's results are presented. Finally, a discussion section with suggested research directions is included.

Social network theory

According to social network theory, an intellectual structure is a specific type of network in which influential works such as articles and books are tied to one another by the co-citations made in published research (e.g., Kuhn 1996). In this context, network analysis focuses on the patterns of such ties (Tichy, Tushman, and Fombrun 1979) to identify network subgroups, and ultimately, to infer future developments within a network based on recent trends and research traditions (e.g., Borgatti et al. 2009).

The identification of network subgroups can be achieved with relational models delineating relationship intensity among influential works (Burt 1980). This intensity is represented by the number of times a work is cited along with another influential work in the same study. By focusing on the intensity of cohesive citation relationships in a set of articles and books, relational models are valuable for locating specific research themes (e.g., Marsden and Friedkin 1993). Such topics are regions of the network composed of influential works more closely connected to one another than to the rest of the network (Scott 2000; Tichy, Tushman, and Fombrun 1979). Thus, more co-citations between two influential works indicate a more intense relationship. This, in turn, signals a similarity of research relationships. As such, these intellectual topics cover a particular stream of research and are distinct from other content areas in the same overall research network (cf. Pieters et al. 1999).

Since networks are not static but instead are continually in a state of change (Carley 1999), the composition of the research topics is likely to shift over time. Such a dynamic change reflects the need to study the influence of works in franchising research longitudinally to examine their impact on the development of the field. After such analysis, future research directions can be identified based on the theoretical foundations used in previous research and recent trends related to these established research traditions.

Method

We evaluated 67,073 citations (7688 in 1970s–1980s; 18,492 in 1990s; and 40,893 in 2000s) from 1718 franchising-related articles (337 in 1970s–1980s; 474 in 1990s; and 907 in 2000s) in 40 academic journals identified as relevant to franchising research (see Table 1). The duration of our analysis covers the 1970–2008 timeframe. Similar to other bibliometric analyses, we divided the data into distinct periods (1970s–1980s, 1990s, and 2000s) to provide sufficient depth in each timeframe and maintain the applicability of our longitudinal evaluation.

Based on precedent in other business-related disciplines such as strategy (Ramos-Rodríguez and Ruíz-Navarro 2004), logis-

Table 1
Journals included in study.

Academy of Management Journal	Journal of Interactive Marketing
Academy of Management Review	Journal of International Business Studies
Administrative Science Quarterly	Journal of International Marketing
Advances in Consumer Research	Journal of Management
British Journal of Management	Journal of Management Studies
California Management Review	Journal of Marketing
Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice	Journal of Marketing Research
European Journal of Marketing	Journal of Product Innovation Management
Harvard Business Review	Journal of Public Policy & Marketing
Industrial Marketing Management	Journal of Retailing
International Journal of Research in Marketing	Journal of Service Research
International Marketing Review	Journal of Small Business Management
International Small Business Journal	Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science
Journal of Advertising	Management Science
Journal of Advertising Research	Marketing Letters
Journal of Business	Marketing Science
Journal of Business Research	Organization Science
Journal of Business Venturing	Sloan Management Review
Journal of Consumer Psychology	Small Business Economics
Journal of Consumer Research	Strategic Management Journal

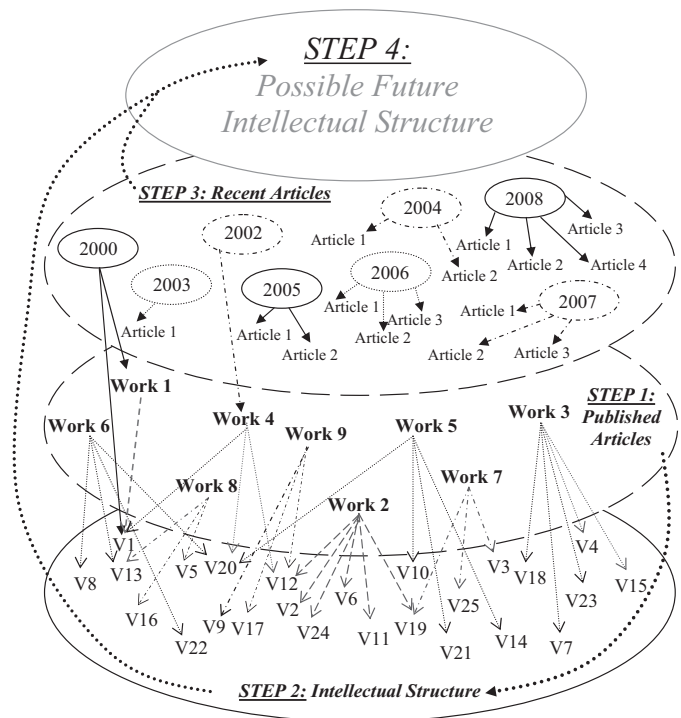


Fig. 1. Illustrative study overview.

tics (Charvet, Cooper, and Gardner 2008), and entrepreneurship (Reader and Watkins 2006; Schildt, Zahra, and Sillanpää 2006), the co-citation data were analyzed with MDS and HCA to assess the cohesion of influential works in franchising research (Knoke and Yang 2008; Marsden 1990; McCain 1990). As indicated earlier, co-citation data are a form of relational data that allow researchers to empirically assess and understand the social network attributes of an intellectual structure (Scott 2000; Wasserman and Faust 1994). Other forms of network analysis use interviews and traditional surveys, but they typically have considerable informant bias (Burt 1983). Additionally, by using interval co-citation data rather than categorical data, the application of MDS and HCA simultaneously reduces systematic bias and increases methodological rigor vis-à-vis other perceptual-based approaches.

We accessed available franchising citation data with generalized keyword terms in each of the chosen 40 journals (Schildt, Zahra, and Sillanpää 2006). The search terms used (“franchise”, “franchisee”, “franchisor”, and “franchising”) were entered in the topic field of the *Web of Science* database. As the predominant secondary data source for social network and intellectual structure research (Dant and Brown 2009; McCain 1990; Ramos-Rodríguez and Ruíz-Navarro 2004), the published articles included in the analysis were only those with the specified search terms appearing in the author-provided keywords, author-provided abstract, article title, or frequent article reference terms (Thomson Reuters 2009). Articles published as editorial material, book reviews, biographical information, or other indirect research content were excluded to increase this study’s contribution. Though relating to the topics of both franchising and retailing, the finalized database of published articles provides the basis for establishing and evaluating the intellectual structure

on which franchising research has developed. Relevant influential articles published more recently were identified in our data to examine the degree to which emergent themes built on or modified established research. From this evaluation of the past and present domain of franchising studies, future opportunities can be determined to develop the research area even further. For illustrative purposes, an example of this four step process is noted in Fig. 1.

The process to establish the intellectual structure of franchising is based on direct citation and co-citation analysis. First, the most cited theory-based influential works were identified for analysis. Since the domain of this study was to evaluate the theoretical underpinnings of franchising research and their contribution to theory development, influential method-specific works were excluded from the analysis. Then, co-citation matrices for each period (1970s–1980s, 1990s, and 2000s) were developed based on the number of times each influential work was co-cited with another influential work in the same period. These relational data were analyzed in MDS and HCA to evaluate the research domain’s intellectual structure. To examine the possibility of model instability (Burt 1983), the number of influential works was increased in each subset model of publications until the threshold for a good model was reached (see Table 2). Since stress values of 0.10 or below indicate a good fit (Ramos-Rodríguez and Ruíz-Navarro 2004) and equal citation counts of influential works exist in each subset, the number of works included in each period varied. To maintain this rigor, 11 works were mapped in the 1970s–1980s, 31 works in the 1990s, and 28 works in the 2000s.

In MDS, spatial distances were used to group influential works at a precise standardized distance of 0.25 (McCain 1986;

Table 2
Stress values comparison.

1970s–1980s subset	Stress value	1990s subset	Stress value	2000s subset	Stress value
Top 11	0.06464	Top 10	0.01811	Top 12	0.07514
Top 19	0.10845	Top 11	0.02199	Top 14	0.08437
Top 31	0.11723	Top 14	0.03531	Top 19	0.08881
Top 53	0.12822	Top 19	0.05142	Top 22	0.09834
		Top 20	0.05765	Top 28	0.09891
		Top 21	0.05973	Top 38	0.11193
		Top 25	0.07440	Top 47	0.11816
		Top 27	0.08123		
		Top 28	0.08316		
		Top 31	0.08683		
		Top 41	0.10156		
		Top 44	0.10769		

Scott 2000; Small 1999). Predecessor and successor research groups were established by the common works appearing in each group across time periods (Cornelius, Landström, and Persson 2006; Hult and Chabowski 2008). Therefore, a research group from a preceding period with the same influential work in a successive period's group was established as a predecessor group. Likewise, a research group during a later period found to have the same work in an earlier period's group was determined to be a successor group. Other techniques have been used in bibliometric research (McCain 1984; Reader and Watkins 2006), but the solutions provided typically reduce theoretical generalizability.

As a complementary method, Ward's method in HCA was applied and the agglomerative dendrogram was evaluated to determine the research clusters during each time period (Charvet, Cooper, and Gardner 2008; Ketchen and Shook 1996). Similar to the longitudinal analysis of the MDS results, the common works appearing across time periods in the HCA results provided the basis for determining predecessor and successor research clusters. Comparison of the two methods indicates similar topics emerged in each analysis.

The research group and cluster names were validated based on three criteria: (1) the topics and content of the works cited, (2) the terminology of the articles citing the influential works, and (3) the nature of recent trends in franchising and retailing research. Research cliques in the MDS results are identified as a privileged class of research group in bibliometric mapping. They were verified based on the complete exclusivity of three or more influential works grouped together (Alba and Moore 1983; Wasserman and Faust 1994). Using this approach, these research groups are integral to theory development relating to franchising and reflect the sustained patterns of influence across time periods (Galaskiewicz and Wasserman 1993; Kilduff and Tsai 2003).

Results

As indicated in our results, the influence of the retailing literature on the intellectual structure of franchising research is noticeable. In this section, we compare our MDS and HCA findings as they relate to the co-citation analysis for each time period to evaluate the longitudinal underpinnings of franchis-

ing research. This comparison clearly shows the complementary nature of using both MDS and HCA in the same bibliometric study. For instance, the precision of MDS allows researchers to distinguish between research groups and their elite counterparts (i.e., research cliques) to show the topics receiving more concentrated attention. Meanwhile, HCA provides succinct generalizations underlying research possibilities not readily noticeable in MDS. Taken together, the simultaneous comparison of both methods clearly reveals an informed perspective for researchers not possible with each method in isolation.

In this section, we first detail the nature of franchising research during the 1970s–1980s in Figs. 2 and 3. Second, the results for the 1990s are introduced (Figs. 4 and 5). Then, as noted in Figs. 6 and 7, we present our findings for 2000–2008. Finally, a comparative summary of the MDS and HCA results reviews the considerable similarities and noteworthy distinctions

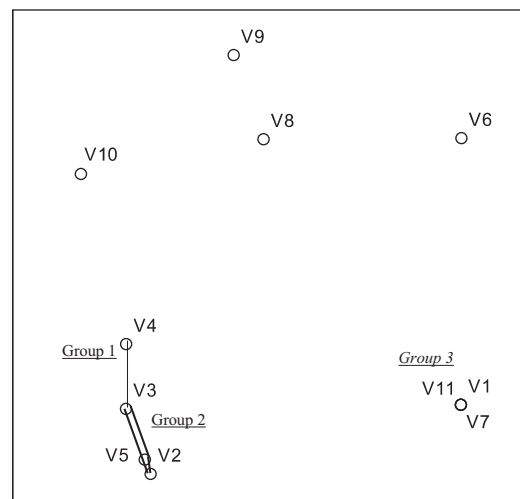


Fig. 2. Intellectual structure by multidimensional scaling, 1970s–1980s.

Stress: 0.06464; bolded lines are research cliques; italicized name = predecessor group.

V1 = Blattberg, Eppen, and Lieberman (1981); V2 = Bucklin (1978); V3 = Hall, Knapp, and Winsten (1961); V4 = Ingene and Lusch (1981); V5 = Ingene (1982); V6 = Lindquist (1974); V7 = Monroe (1973); V8 = Nelson (1958); V9 = Ozanne and Hunt (1971); V10 = Stern and El-Ansary (1977); V11 = Wilkinson, Mason, and Paksoy (1982). *Group 1* (V3 & V4): Retail Distribution and Structure; *Group 2* (V2, V3, & V5): Retail Productivity; *Group 3* (V1, V7, & V11): Short-Term Pricing and Consumer Perception.

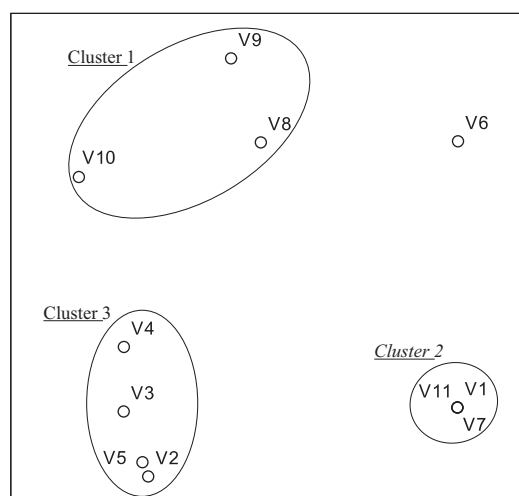


Fig. 3. Intellectual structure by hierarchical cluster analysis, 1970s–1980s.

Italicized name = predecessor cluster.

V1 = Blattberg, Eppen, and Lieberman (1981); V2 = Bucklin (1978); V3 = Hall, Knapp, and Winsten (1961); V4 = Ingene and Lusch (1981); V5 = Ingene (1982); V6 = Lindquist (1974); V7 = Monroe (1973); V8 = Nelson (1958); V9 = Ozanne and Hunt (1971); V10 = Stern and El-Ansary (1977); V11 = Wilkinson, Mason, and Paksoy (1982). Cluster 1 (V8, V9, & V10): Franchise Channels and Location; Cluster 2 (V1, V7, & V11): Short-Term Pricing and Consumer Perception; Cluster 3 (V2, V3, V4, & V5): Retail Structure and Performance.

between both methods. This provides a considerable basis on which to develop future research opportunities in the subsequent discussion section.

Intellectual structure of franchising research, 1970s–1980s

An evaluation of Figs. 2 and 3 indicates three research groups in the MDS results and three research clusters in the HCA results during the 1970s–1980s. These findings indicate considerable correspondence between each technique. More specifically, research related to short-term pricing and consumer perception (Group 3 and Cluster 2) provides identical insight concerning its importance to franchising research. However, the MDS results show this topic is a research clique, while it is identified as a research cluster in the HCA findings. This provides an example of the interpretive possibilities with MDS that do not exist with HCA alone. By noting a research clique vis-à-vis another MDS research group or its similar HCA counterpart, we can surmise that Group 3 is a more concentrated research effort.

Furthermore, the HCA results during this early period provide a unique difference between the two methods that was not documented in the 1990s or 2000s. In fact, our HCA shows that franchise channels and location (Cluster 1) was an emergent topic in franchising research. Though juxtaposed with the other research topics in the 1970s–1980s, this finding was not evident in the MDS results as the influential works included in this research cluster were not perceptually close among citing works in the co-citation data. As evidenced in later periods, the emergence of Cluster 1 provided insight into the importance of channel structure relationships.

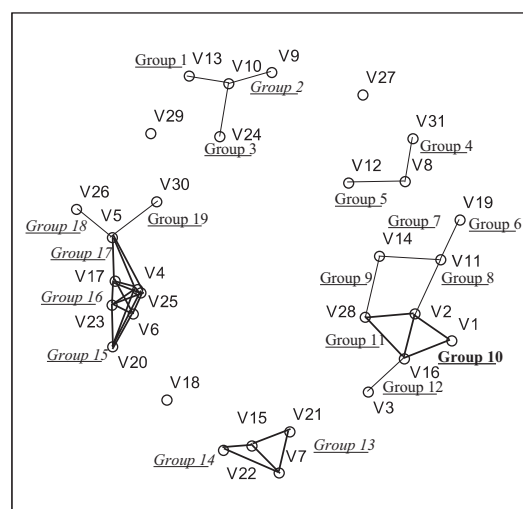


Fig. 4. Intellectual structure by multidimensional scaling, 1990s.

Stress: 0.08683; bolded lines are research cliques; italicized name = predecessor group; bolded name = successor group.

V1 = Blattberg, Eppen, and Lieberman (1981); V2 = Blattberg and Wisniewski (1989); V3 = Blattberg and Neslin (1990); V4 = Brickley and Dark (1987); V5 = Carney and Gedajlovic (1991); V6 = Caves and Murphy (1976); V7 = Coughlan and Wernerfelt (1989); V8 = Dickson and Sawyer (1990); V9 = Dwyer, Schurr, and Oh (1987); V10 = Gaski (1984); V11 = Gupta (1988); V12 = Hoch, Drèze, and Purk (1994); V13 = Hunt and Nevin (1974); V14 = Inman, McAlister, and Hoyer (1990); V15 = Jeuland and Shugan (1983); V16 = Kumar and Leone (1988); V17 = Lafontaine (1992); V18 = Lal (1990); V19 = Lattin and Bucklin (1989); V20 = Mathewson and Winter (1985); V21 = McGuire and Staelin (1983); V22 = Moorthy (1987); V23 = Norton (1988); V24 = Porter (1980); V25 = Rubin (1978); V26 = Shane (1996); V27 = Thaler (1985); V28 = Walters (1991); V29 = Williamson (1975); V30 = Williamson (1985); V31 = Winer (1986). Group 1 (V9 & V13): Distribution Channel Power and Conflict; Group 2 (V9 & V10): Distribution Channel Relationships; Group 3 (V10 & V24): Distribution Channel Competition; Group 4 (V8 & V31): Price-Based Consumer Choice; Group 5 (V8 & V12): Strategic Consumer Pricing; Group 6 (V11 & V19): Reference Pricing and Promotion Effectiveness; Group 7 (V11 & V14): Promotion Signaling and Effectiveness; Group 8 (V2 & V11): Competitive Pricing and Promotion Effectiveness; Group 9 (V14 & V28): Promotion Signaling and Product Substitution; Group 10 (V1, V2, & V16): Outlet Consumer Pricing and Promotion; Group 11 (V2, V16, & V28): Outlet Consumer Pricing and Substitution; Group 12 (V3 & V16): Sales Promotion Management; Group 13 (V7, V15, & V21): Distribution Channel Management and Integration; Group 14 (V7, V15, & V22): Distribution Channel Management and Profitability; Group 15 (V4, V6, V20, V23, & V25): Franchise Organizational Contracting; Group 16 (V4, V6, V17, V23, & V25): Franchise Organization and Agency Theory; Group 17 (V4, V5, V17, & V25): Franchising Organizational System; Group 18 (V5 & V26): Franchise System Growth; Group 19 (V5 & V30): Franchise System Structure.

Finally, the MDS results indicate two research groups related to the HCA topic of retail structure and performance (Cluster 3). Rather than specifying a general research entity, the MDS map clearly shows a research clique emphasizing retail productivity (Group 2) and a related research group focusing on retail distribution and structure (Group 1). This distinction between productivity and structure in the general retail context indicates the fundamental nature of performance in franchising. In fact, the concentrated emphasis on retail productivity (Group 2) in comparison to retail distribution and structure (Group 1) provides additional insight related to the HCA topic of retail structure and performance (Cluster 1).

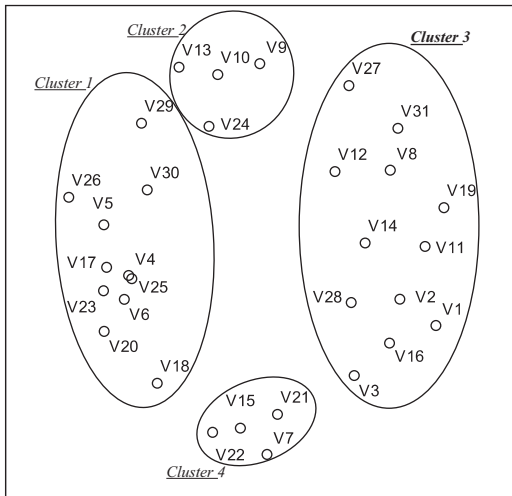


Fig. 5. Intellectual structure by hierarchical cluster analysis, 1990s.

Italicized name = predecessor cluster; bolded name = successor cluster.

V1 = Blattberg, Eppen, and Lieberman (1981); V2 = Blattberg and Wisniewski (1989); V3 = Blattberg and Neslin (1990); V4 = Brickley and Dark (1987); V5 = Carney and Gedajlovic (1991); V6 = Caves and Murphy (1976); V7 = Coughlan and Wernerfelt (1989); V8 = Dickson and Sawyer (1990); V9 = Dwyer, Schurr, and Oh (1987); V10 = Gaski (1984); V11 = Gupta (1988); V12 = Hoch, Drèze, and Purk (1994); V13 = Hunt and Nevin (1974); V14 = Inman, McAlister, and Hoyer (1990); V15 = Jeuland and Shugan (1983); V16 = Kumar and Leone (1988); V17 = Lafontaine (1992); V18 = Lal (1990); V19 = Lattin and Bucklin (1989); V20 = Mathewson and Winter (1985); V21 = McGuire and Staelin (1983); V22 = Moorthy (1987); V23 = Norton (1988); V24 = Porter (1980); V25 = Rubin (1978); V26 = Shane (1996); V27 = Thaler (1985); V28 = Walters (1991); V29 = Williamson (1975); V30 = Williamson (1985); V31 = Winer (1986). **Cluster 1** (V4, V5, V6, V17, V18, V20, V23, V25, V26, V29, & V30): *Franchise Organizational Structure*; **Cluster 2** (V9, V10, V13, & V24): *Distribution Channel Competitiveness*; **Cluster 3** (V1, V2, V3, V8, V11, V12, V14, V16, V19, V27, V28, & V31): *Competitive Consumer Pricing and Promotion*; **Cluster 4** (V7, V15, V21, & V22): *Distribution Channel Management*.

Intellectual structure of franchising research, 1990s

As shown in Figs. 4 and 5, there are four general research topics influencing franchising research during the 1990s. First, three research groups were determined in the MDS results which emphasized distribution channel power and conflict (Group 1), distribution channel relationships (Group 2), and distribution channel competition (Group 3). The corollary research topic in the HCA results indicates one cluster concerning distribution channel competitiveness (Cluster 2). From this, we can conclude that the overall subject has three facets in franchising research. Taken together, our findings indicate that competition in the distribution channel was influential during this period.

The second topic in the 1990s involves two distinct themes. One interrelated topic emphasizes price-based consumer choice (Group 4) and strategic consumer pricing (Group 5). The other interconnected theme includes two research cliques related to outlet consumer pricing and promotion (Group 10) and outlet consumer pricing and substitution (Group 11), but it also covers similar topics related to reference pricing and promotion effectiveness (Group 6), promotion signaling and effectiveness (Group 7), competitive pricing and promotion effectiveness (Group 8), promotion signaling and product substitution (Group

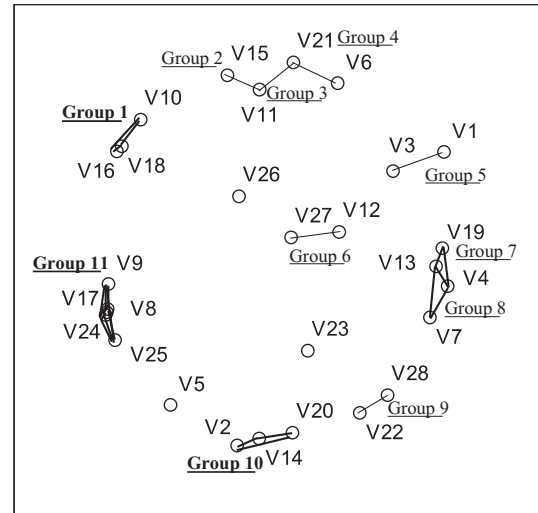


Fig. 6. Intellectual structure by multidimensional scaling, 2000s.

Stress: 0.09891; bolded lines are research cliques; bolded name = successor group.

V1 = Alba et al. (1997); V2 = Anderson and Narus (1990); V3 = Babin, Darden, and Griffin (1994); V4 = Baker, Levy, and Grewal (1992); V5 = Barney (1991); V6 = Bell and Lattin (1998); V7 = Bitner (1992); V8 = Brickley and Dark (1987); V9 = Caves and Murphy (1976); V10 = Choi (1991); V11 = Dhar and Hoch (1997); V12 = Dodds, Monroe, and Grewal (1991); V13 = Donovan and Rossiter (1982); V14 = Dwyer, Schurr, and Oh (1987); V15 = Hoch et al. (1995); V16 = Jeuland and Shugan (1983); V17 = Lafontaine (1992); V18 = McGuire and Staelin (1983); V19 = Mehrabian and Russell (1974); V20 = Morgan and Hunt (1994); V21 = Narasimhan, Neslin, and Sen (1996); V22 = Oliver (1997); V23 = Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988); V24 = Rubin (1978); V25 = Shane (1996); V26 = Thaler (1985); V27 = Zeithaml (1988); V28 = Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman (1996). **Group 1** (V10, V16, & V18): *Channel Pricing, Profitability, and Integration*; **Group 2** (V11 & V15): *Price-Based Sales Elasticity*; **Group 3** (V11 & V21): *Promotion-Based Sales Elasticity*; **Group 4** (V6 & V21): *Pricing Strategy and Promotional Elasticity*; **Group 5** (V1 & V3): *Channel Incentives and Consumer Experience*; **Group 6** (V12 & V27): *Consumer Evaluation and Perceived Value*; **Group 7** (V4, V13, & V19): *Outlet Atmosphere and Environmental Psychology Theory*; **Group 8** (V4, V7, & V13): *Outlet Atmosphere and Applied Environmental Psychology*; **Group 9** (V22 & V28): *Service Quality and Consumer Satisfaction*; **Group 10** (V2, V14, & V20): *Channel Relationship Management*; **Group 11** (V8, V9, V17, V24, & V25): *Franchise System Growth and Structure*.

9), and sales promotion management (Group 12). The HCA confirms the general importance of competitive consumer pricing and promotion (Cluster 2), but the exact details of consumer interaction is noteworthy in the MDS results.

Next, two linked research cliques appear in the MDS results for this period. The first focuses on distribution channel management and integration (Group 13), while the second emphasizes the importance of distribution channel management and profitability (Group 14). These results are supported by distribution channel management (Cluster 4) in the HCA.

Lastly, five interrelated research groups complete the results for the 1990s. Three research cliques focus on franchise organizational contracting (Group 15), franchising organization and agency theory (Group 16), and the franchising organizational system (Group 17). Related to these, two more research groups emphasize franchise system growth (Group 18) and franchise system structure (Group 19). Taken together, these relate to the HCA results confirming franchising organizational struc-

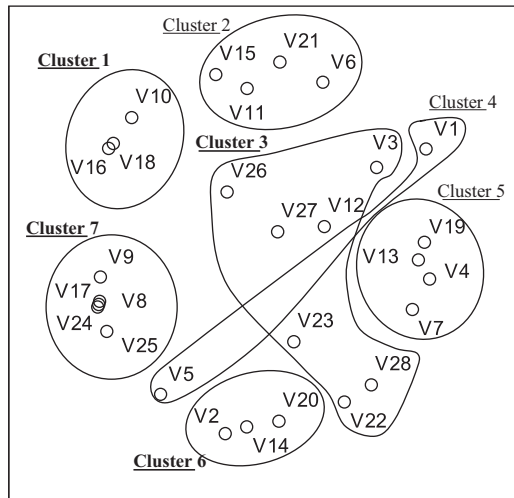


Fig. 7. Intellectual structure by hierarchical cluster analysis, 2000s.

Bolded name = successor cluster.

V1 = Alba et al. (1997); V2 = Anderson and Narus (1990); V3 = Babin, Darden, and Griffin (1994); V4 = Baker, Levy, and Grewal (1992); V5 = Barney (1991); V6 = Bell and Lattin (1998); V7 = Bitner (1992); V8 = Brickley and Dark (1987); V9 = Caves and Murphy (1976); V10 = Choi (1991); V11 = Dhar and Hoch (1997); V12 = Dodds, Monroe, and Grewal (1991); V13 = Donovan and Rossiter (1982); V14 = Dwyer, Schurr, and Oh (1987); V15 = Hoch et al. (1995); V16 = Jeuland and Shugan (1983); V17 = Lafontaine (1992); V18 = McGuire and Staelin (1983); V19 = Mehrabian and Russell (1974); V20 = Morgan and Hunt (1994); V21 = Narasimhan, Neslin, and Sen (1996); V22 = Oliver (1997); V23 = Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988); V24 = Rubin (1978); V25 = Shane (1996); V26 = Thaler (1985); V27 = Zeithaml (1988); V28 = Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman (1996). **Cluster 1 (V10, V16, & V18): Channel Pricing, Profitability, and Integration;** **Cluster 2 (V6, V11, V15, & V21): Price and Promotion Elasticity;** **Cluster 3 (V3, V12, V22, V23, V26, V27, V28): Consumer Experience, Perceived Value, and Satisfaction;** **Cluster 4 (V1 & V5): Channel Incentives and Resource Development;** **Cluster 5 (V4, V7, V13, & V19): Outlet Atmosphere and Environmental Psychology;** **Cluster 6 (V2, V14, & V20): Channel Relationship Management;** **Cluster 7 (V8, V9, V17, V24, & V25): Franchise System Growth and Structure.**

ture (Cluster 1) as an overall research topic. However, the MDS findings allow us to pinpoint the area of concentrated research efforts during this period.

Intellectual structure of franchising research, 2000s

The MDS and HCA findings illustrated in Figs. 6 and 7 show six general research topics influencing franchising research during the 2000s. First, research focusing on channel pricing, profitability, and integration forms a research clique in the MDS results (Group 1) and a research cluster in the HCA (Cluster 1). Further similarities between the two methods were found with three linked research groups emphasizing price-based sales elasticity (Group 2), promotion-based sales elasticity (Group 3), and pricing strategy and promotional elasticity (Group 4). These three groups were confirmed with the emergence of one research cluster focusing on price and promotion elasticity (Cluster 2).

Third, the comparative midsections of each map show the only clearly divergent results between MDS and HCA during this period. The MDS results indicate three separate research groups: channel incentives and consumer experience (Group 5), consumer evaluation and perceived value (Group 6), and ser-

vice quality and consumer satisfaction (Group 9). The results from the HCA show two research clusters: one focusing on consumer experience, perceived value, and satisfaction (Cluster 3) and another emphasizing channel incentives and resource development (Cluster 4). Given the different MDS and HCA results in this area, it is logical to conclude that the wide range of Clusters 3 and 4 indicate the opportunity for continued research on these topics.

The remaining comparative findings during the 2000s emphasize the noticeably similar findings between MDS and HCA. The fourth topic in this period indicates two interrelated research cliques in the MDS results representing outlet atmosphere and environmental psychology theory (Group 7) and outlet atmosphere and applied environmental psychology (Group 8). This topic is confirmed by one research cluster showing outlet atmosphere and environmental psychology (Cluster 5) as a combined concept. Fifth, both a research clique and research cluster examines the topic of channel relationship management (Group 10 and Cluster 6). Finally, the research clique and research cluster focusing on franchise system growth and structure (Group 11 and Cluster 7) represent the continued influence of franchising topics in this research area.

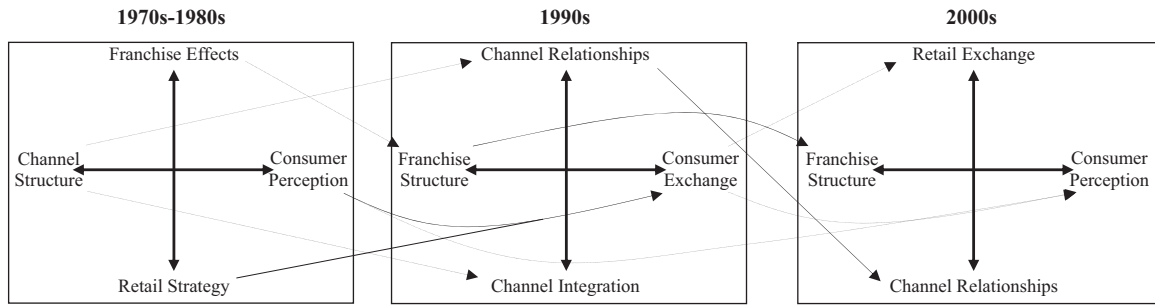
Comparative intellectual structure summary

Taken together, the use of MDS and HCA simultaneously provides clear insights otherwise unattainable with only one method. Each method has strengths which complement the other. The MDS results show that the specification of research groups and cliques offers precise evaluation of franchising research. Meanwhile, the HCA indicates the generalized research clusters of the domain and can propose suggestions for future research.

Though eleven clusters across the three time periods confirmed the MDS findings, the inconsistencies between the HCA and MDS results require our attention. One such contrasting result was the emergence of the franchise channels and location (Cluster 1) topic in the 1970s–1980s period. However, as the HCA was able to detect a possible underlying future research theme, the importance of franchise structure became more prevalent in subsequent periods. A similar conclusion can be made concerning the relevance of consumer experience, perceived value, and satisfaction (Cluster 3) as well as channel incentives and resource development (Cluster 4) in the 2000s period. Thus, it appears that prevailing research trends in franchising research could continue to emphasize these two topics into the foreseeable future. This reasoning is based on the emergent nature of channel resource development and consumer-focused exchanges. Since theory development is based on the simultaneous development of both established and emergent research (Kuhn 1996), our suggested research typology is based in part on these recent developments.

Discussion

This section has two parts. First, we discuss the underpinnings of franchising research by analyzing the visualized vertical and horizontal dimensions, MDS findings, and HCA results



Notes: Dashed lines indicate content similarity.
Solid lines indicate direct relation.

Fig. 8. Co-citation map dimension development. Notes: Dashed lines indicate content similarity. Solid lines indicate direct relation.

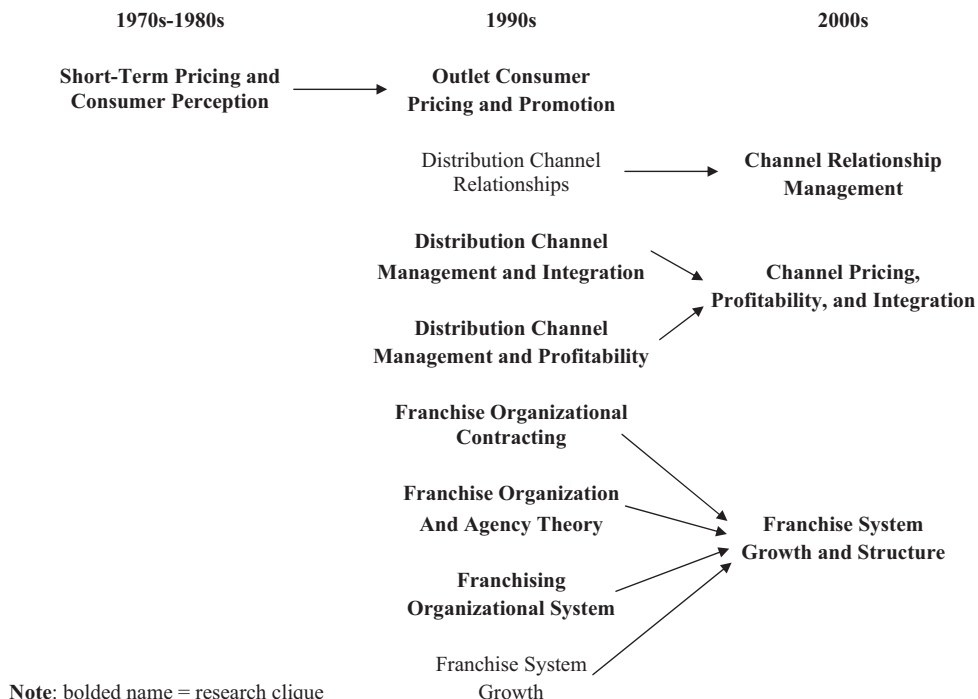
presented in the previous section. Combined, these three longitudinal assessments provide the basis for future research topics. Therefore, the second part of this section includes an overview to advance the topic of franchising in a research setting. This is accomplished by introducing the franchising-specific research typology and then relating current research to future research opportunities.

Intellectual structure development

The longitudinal MDS and HCA results of this study allow us the opportunity to evaluate franchising research in three ways prior to proposing a typology for future research advancement. First, as found in Fig. 8, we assess the dimensions on which franchising research is based by examining the development of the co-citation maps' vertical and horizontal axes across the three periods of this study (Hoffman and Holbrook 1993). Content similarity across time periods was based on comparable themes

identified in each map's research groups and clusters. Meanwhile, direct relation from one period's dimensions to the next was determined by the similarity of works appearing in the co-citation maps. Second, the development of franchising research by the MDS results as shown in Fig. 9 is presented to provide precise insights into the advancement of its theoretical underpinnings over time. Finally, as indicated in Fig. 10, we supplement these results with a longitudinal overview based on the generalized HCA findings. Taken together, these three approaches provide a foundation on which to introduce our suggested future research typology.

Co-citation map dimension development. Using the co-citation map from the 1970s–1980s results, the vertical dimension of this time period indicates a clear distinction between franchise effects and retail strategy. Based on the premise that franchising influences economic activity (Ozanne and Hunt 1971), it is noteworthy that this topic was introduced at an early stage. However, it was contrasted by elements of



Note: bolded name = research clique

Fig. 9. Franchising intellectual structure development by multidimensional scaling.

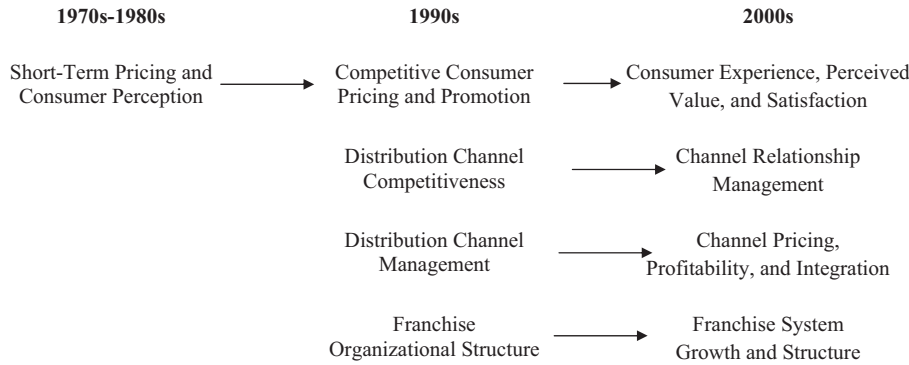


Fig. 10. Franchising intellectual structure development by hierarchical cluster analysis.

retail strategy to include issues related to pricing and productivity (Blattberg, Eppen, and Lieberman 1981; Bucklin 1978; Monroe 1973; Wilkinson, Mason, and Paksoy 1982). In short, this provides a clear distinction between macroeconomic and microeconomic principles in franchising research.

Meanwhile, the horizontal dimension in the 1970s–1980s co-citation map defines the difference between channel structure and consumer perception. The topic of channel structure specifically addressed themes related to retail structure and distribution channels (Ingene and Lusch, 1981; Stern and El-Ansary 1977). By comparison, the importance of consumer perception became relevant based on topics emphasizing the subjectivity of image and price (Lindquist, 1974; Monroe, 1973). Thus, the themes along this axis note the interface between both business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-consumer (B2C) topics in the franchise network.

The vertical dimension during the 1990s relates to research focusing on channel structure in the previous period. However, this topic underwent further analysis and distinguished between channel relationships and channel integration in the second period of our analysis. Studies related to channel relationships typically emphasized the importance of dyadic relationship development as well as distribution channel power and conflict (Dwyer, Schurr, and Oh 1987; Gaski 1984; Hunt and Nevin 1974). This was contrasted by channel integration topics focusing on downstream vertical integration and channel management (Coughlan and Wernerfelt 1989; McGuire and Staelin 1983). As such, the distinction between channel relationships and channel integration along this axis is indicative of the internal and external tensions in a franchise.

On the same co-citation map, the horizontal dimension compares topics examining franchise structure and consumer exchange. As evidence to support the development of a research topic, the study of franchise structure during the 1990s was related to the importance of franchise effects in the previous period. However, as an advance in knowledge, this theme emphasized franchising topics such as organizational forms, systems, contracting, and growth in the 1990s (Brickley and Dark 1987; Carney and Gedajlovic 1991; Caves and Murphy 1976; Lafontaine 1992; Norton 1988; Rubin 1978; Shane 1996). Also, research focusing on consumer exchange in the second period was based directly on the convergence of work related to consumer perception and retail strategy in the 1970s–1980s.

Typically, topics in this area emphasized price competition, promotion effects, and brand choice (Blattberg, Eppen, and Lieberman 1981; Blattberg and Wisniewski 1989; Gupta 1988; Lattin and Bucklin 1989).

During the 2000s, the vertical dimension ranges from retail exchange to channel relationships. The topic of retail exchange was related to research on consumer exchange in the 1990s. Still, retail exchange topics in the 2000s examined themes such as retail price differences, promotion elasticity, and brand choice variation (Bell and Lattin 1998; Dhar and Hoch 1997; Hoch et al. 1995; Narasimhan, Neslin, and Sen 1996). This was contrasted by research focusing on channel relationships. Directly related to similar research in the 1990s, this topic in the 2000s analyzed the importance of dyadic channel commitment, trust, and partnerships (Anderson and Narus 1990; Dwyer, Schurr, and Oh 1987; Morgan and Hunt 1994). As such, the distinctions along this axis indicate the multi-faceted demands placed on franchisors and franchisees to remain competitive.

By comparison, the horizontal dimension contrasts the topics of franchise structure and consumer perception. Research related to franchise structure was influenced by the 1990s topic of franchise structure and continued to focus on organizational issues specific to franchise form, system, and growth (Brickley and Dark 1987; Caves and Murphy 1976; Lafontaine 1992; Rubin 1978; Shane 1996). This was a clear distinction from topics related to consumer perception. Though related to similar research in the 1970s–1980s and the 1990s, the domain of this theme changed considerably. Rather than focusing on the subjectivity of image and price as in the 1970s–1980s (Lindquist 1974; Monroe 1973) or the influence of promotion and pricing in the 1990s (Blattberg, Eppen, and Lieberman 1981; Kumar and Leone 1988; Lattin and Bucklin 1989), consumer perception research became more comprehensive during the 2000s. This consumer-focused theme emphasized issues related to the psychological impact of outlet environment, surroundings, and atmosphere (Baker, Levy, and Grewal 1992; Bitner 1992; Donovan and Rossiter 1982; Mehrabian and Russell 1974). Therefore, the comparison of B2B and B2C concepts is indicative of their continued relevance in franchising research.

Longitudinal development by multidimensional scaling.

As shown in Fig. 9, a comparison of research groups appearing in the MDS co-citation maps during the 1970s–1980s, 1990s, and 2000s provides insight into the development of predecessor

and successor groups during the study. In general, there were two trends that maintained (rather than expanded or consolidated) its status as a research group across different time periods. First, research in the 1970s–1980s formed a clique by focusing on short-term pricing and consumer perception (Group 3). This topic developed in the 1990s to become a research clique on outlet consumer pricing and promotion (Group 10). The fact that this general theme maintained as a research clique from the 1970s–1980s to the 1990s is indicative of the concentrated consumer focus of early franchising research. As such, this integral topic made way for strategic themes (e.g., channel integration, and franchise growth) later in the domain's development.

The second research maintenance trend related to a research group in the 1990s emphasizing distribution channel relationships (Group 2). By the 2000s, research on this topic had formed into a clique and focused on channel relationship management (Group 10). As such, this reflects the increased focus on channel issues related not only to relationships, but also to the management of such relationships.

Contrasting the 1990s and 2000s periods, two examples of research consolidation were found integral to the underpinnings of franchising research. The first relates to two research cliques in the 1990s examining distribution channel management and integration (Group 13) and distribution channel management and profitability (Group 14). These two research topics merged to become one clique in the 2000s focusing on channel pricing, profitability, and integration (Group 1). Thus, though franchising research concerning distribution channels was highly concentrated in the 1990s, this theme became even more focused in the 2000s. The other example involves four topics in the 1990s: three cliques related to franchise organizational contracting (Group 15), franchise organization and agency theory (Group 16), and franchising organizational system (Group 17), as well as another group focusing on franchise system growth (Group 18). By the 2000s, these groups compacted to formed one clique emphasizing franchise system growth and structure (Group 11). Similar to the increased concentration of studies relating to distribution channels, the consolidation of research focused on the franchise system shows the need to incorporate emergent topics to advance the field.

Longitudinal development by hierarchical cluster analysis. Contrary to the research dynamics indicated by the MDS results, the HCA results in Fig. 10 show research maintenance trends only. One such instance proved to have longevity for the duration of the study. Beginning in the 1970s–1980s period, one research cluster analyzed short-term pricing and consumer perception (Cluster 2). This topic developed during the 1990s to become a cluster focusing on competitive consumer pricing and promotion (Cluster 3). Then, extending its development into the 2000s, a related research cluster emphasized consumer experience, perceived value, and satisfaction (Cluster 3).

The other three indications that research topics were maintained across time periods took place during the 1990s and 2000s. First, a cluster in the 1990s focusing on distribution channel competitiveness (Cluster 2) developed into a 2000s research cluster concerning channel relationship management (Cluster 6). Second, a cluster in the 1990s on distribution channel manage-

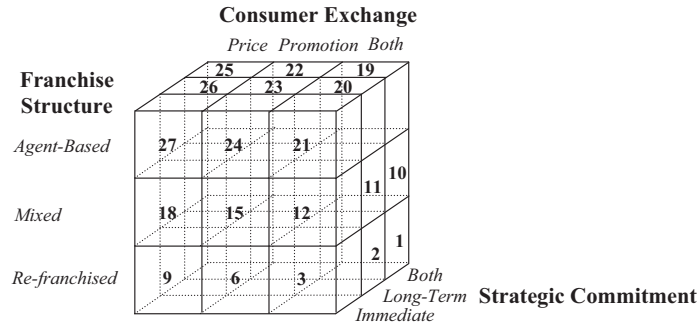
ment (Cluster 4) became a cluster focusing on channel pricing, profitability, and integration (Cluster 1) in the 2000s. Lastly, a cluster from the 1990s examining franchise organizational structure (Cluster 1) developed into an emphasis on franchise system growth and structure (Cluster 7) by the 2000s. In all, these examples of research theme maintenance indicate the stable nature of the franchising topic, particularly in the last two periods of the study. However, taken together, the HCA results provide an overview of franchising research's theoretical underpinnings. Combining this analysis with the longitudinal development of the co-citation map dimensions and the MDS results, there is considerable basis to provide suggestions related to the future research advancement of franchising research.

Future research advancement

As is evident in the examination of this domain's intellectual structure development, three topics are integral to franchising research in the 2000s and provide a basis for future research opportunities: franchise structure (Group 11; Cluster 7), consumer exchange (Group 6; Cluster 3), and strategic commitment (Group 10; Cluster 6). In this section, we establish a typology that draws on extant and emergent research to integrate these three themes into a single franchising-specific framework. First, we introduce the main elements of the franchising-specific typology (franchise structure, consumer exchange, and strategic commitment) and relate them to recent research (see Fig. 11). Then, research opportunities are proposed based on the contribution of current franchising-related research to the typology.

Franchising-specific typology. The concept of a consumer franchise has been described as a set of relationships built and developed with customers and consumers in mind and is indicative of the trends identified in this study (Glazer 1991; Hunt 1972; Rothschild and Gaidis 1981; Varadarajan 1986). Based on early work in this area (Day and Wensley 1983; Stern 1967), there are many different forms of long-term consumer franchises relating to manufacturers (Ailawadi and Harlam 2004; Kumar and Leone 1988), retailers (Dornoff and Tankersley 1975), products (Ailawadi and Harlam 2004), brands (Keller 1993; Keller and Lehmann 2006; Kumar and Leone 1988; Thompson and Arsel 2004; Thompson, Rindfleisch, and Arsel 2006; Vakratsas and Ambler 1999), and interorganizational systems (Arndt 1979). For instance, the concept of a consumer franchise can originate with the manufacturer's contractual right to place a market offering on a retailer's shelves (Savaskan, Bhattacharya, and Van Wassenhove 2004). In addition, the delivery of exceptional services is known to enhance a business operation's consumer franchise (Grünhagen et al. 2008; Nayyar 1993). That stated, the overriding importance is the focus on the customer and consumer in an overall franchise system. This supports the continued association of the retailing literature and franchising research as interrelated topics (Welsh, Alon, and Falbe 2006). We use this general perspective of consumer franchises as a premise for our typology emphasizing franchise structure, consumer exchange, and strategic commitment.

Franchise structure. Traditional elements of franchising research tend to involve the evaluation of agent-based con-



Franchise Structure	Consumer Exchange	Strategic Commitment	Position	Recent Example
Agent	Price	Immediate	27	Iyer and Villas-Boas 2003
Agent	Price	Long-Term	26	Combs, Ketchen, and Hoover 2004
Agent	Price	Both	25	
Agent	Promotion	Immediate	24	
Agent	Promotion	Long-Term	23	
Agent	Promotion	Both	22	
Agent	Both	Immediate	21	
Agent	Both	Long-Term	20	
Agent	Both	Both	19	Bruce, Desai, and Staelin 2005
Mixed	Price	Immediate	18	Chiang, Chhajed, and Hess 2003
Mixed	Price	Long-Term	17	
Mixed	Price	Both	16	Shane, Shankar, and Aravindakshan 2006
Mixed	Promotion	Immediate	15	
Mixed	Promotion	Long-Term	14	
Mixed	Promotion	Both	13	Srinivasan 2006
Mixed	Both	Immediate	12	
Mixed	Both	Long-Term	11	
Mixed	Both	Both	10	
Re-franchised	Price	Immediate	9	
Re-franchised	Price	Long-Term	8	
Re-franchised	Price	Both	7	
Re-franchised	Promotion	Immediate	6	
Re-franchised	Promotion	Long-Term	5	
Re-franchised	Promotion	Both	4	
Re-franchised	Both	Immediate	3	
Re-franchised	Both	Long-Term	2	
Re-franchised	Both	Both	1	

Note: italicized positions indicate not shown in typology above.

Fig. 11. Proposed future typology for franchising research.

flict resulting from franchisor-franchisee interaction. In recent research, some implementation inefficiencies in franchise systems have been attributed to opportunism, knowledge constraints, and free riding (Barthélemy 2008; Kalnins 2004b; Kidwell, Nygaard, and Silkoset 2007). However, to reduce risk and instead benefit from recent experience, franchisors can develop systems which are a mixture of franchisor- and franchisee-owned outlets (Bürkle and Posselt 2008; Mitsuhashi, Shane, and Sine 2008; Shane, Shankar, and Aravindakshan 2006; Sorenson and Sørensen 2001). As a result, franchisors are able to increase the intangible value provided by the entire franchise system (Dant and Kaufmann 2003; Srinivasan 2006).

Still, franchisors can integrate franchisee-owned outlets over time to become company-owned facilities. Based on the notion that size, age, and resource access create unique long-term competitiveness in a franchise system, franchisors tend to convert franchised facilities after the risk of failure has been minimized by the franchisee (Dant and Kaufmann 2003). In addition, the franchisor’s centralized intangible assets and the intangible local

market assets learned or transferred from the franchisee encourage long-term franchise system integration (Windsperger and Dant 2006). However, franchisors also have been known to initiate franchise system growth again after a period of franchised outlet integration (Castrogiovanni, Combs, and Justis 2006a). Therefore, the conditions and influences of a re-franchised channel structure can prove to be a fruitful area of research (Ghosh and John 1999). As such, three possible forms of franchise structure have been examined to date: agent-based, mixed, and re-franchised. This provides the basis for the first dimension in our typology.

Consumer exchange. Based on early franchising research, consumer exchange in a franchise system can be influenced by multiple channel-focused issues concerning pricing and promotion. For instance, a primary concern with pricing contracts is the resulting demand related to franchisee effort in a franchise system (Desai and Srinivasan 1995). As such, this situation forms the nature of the interaction among franchise system participants. Even though research indicates that pricing

policy can be indicative of relative control in the franchisor-franchisee relationship, revenue sharing, wholesale pricing, and other pricing-specific contracts may lend themselves to be signals of franchise system power as well (Cachon and Lariviere 2005; Shane, Shankar, and Aravindakshan 2006). This suggests that analysis across varied conditions inherent in a franchise system has not been fully explored.

Another aspect of the contracts, actions, and responsibilities which develop during a franchisor-franchisee relationship relates to promotion. In specific, the differences in trade promotion strategies between strong and weak brands indicate that considerable variation can exist (Agrawal 1996). Furthermore, system-wide pricing activity initiated by the franchisor has been forwarded as a basis for the development of franchisee alliances which oppose such requirements (Kalnins 2004a). Given the integral exchange-based nature of franchisor and franchisee price and promotion efforts, this indicates that considerable opportunity exists for examining the importance of optimizing both strategies simultaneously.

To support this further, the price and promotion activities in a franchise system have a considerable influence on consumer experience, perceived value, and satisfaction. Though considered a lower-level, extrinsic attribute, there is little doubt that pricing influences the consumer exchange process (Dodds, Monroe, and Grewal 1991; Zeithaml 1988). Promotional efforts as well as brand- and store-related information have also been related to consumer evaluations (Dodds, Monroe, and Grewal 1991). However, driven by the sometimes interrelated nature of price and promotion, consumer choice is based on the evaluation of quality and value such that a satisfying experience results (Babin, Darden, and Griffin 1994; Oliver 1997; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry 1988; Thaler 1985; Zeithaml 1988; Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman 1996). Since this is a fundamental aspect of the franchising system, price and promotion should not only be considered isolated concepts. Instead, they can be interrelated at the franchise's exchange with the consumer, as well.

Strategic commitment. Lastly, the concept of a franchisor's strategic commitment has been evaluated recently in a variety of contexts as immediate as well as long-term. The study of immediate strategic commitment can take the form of examining bargaining behavior within the context of franchise contract development (Iyer and Villas-Boas 2003). Short-term customer acceptance is another indication of immediate strategic commitment in studies related to franchises (Bruce, Desai, and Staelin 2005; Chiang, Chhajed, and Hess 2003). Still, other measures of an immediate commitment within franchising emphasizes the role of revenues and profits as well as financial liquidity based on activity in the marketplace (Cachon and Lariviere 2005; Iyer and Villas-Boas 2003; Shane, Shankar, and Aravindakshan 2006; Srinivasan 2006).

The long-term commitment of a franchisor has also been examined at considerable length. This established topic in franchising research has tended to focus on power and control – be it by contract evolution, capability development, or extensive investment prior to market entry (Cochet and Garg 2008; Cochet, Dormann, and Ehrmann 2008; Doherty and Alexander 2006;

Erramilli, Agarwal, and Dev 2002; Michael 2000; Paik and Choi 2007; Windsperger 2004). Measures typically relate to the level of franchise growth, age, or geographic breadth (Castrogiovanni and Justis 2002; Castrogiovanni, Combs, and Justis 2006b; Combs, Ketchen, and Hoover 2004; Shane, Shankar, and Aravindakshan 2006; Srinivasan 2006). In addition, channel strategy and relational skills have been identified as important in successful long-term franchise partnerships (Bruce, Desai, and Staelin 2005; Chen and Dimou 2005; Combs, Michael, and Castrogiovanni 2004; Heide and Wathne 2006; Ullrich et al. 2007). Finally, the franchisor's brand value is the result of franchisor actions over an extended period of time (Combs, Ketchen, and Hoover 2004; Kozinets et al. 2004; Weaven and Frazer 2007). However, as lasting brands remain successful by considering immediate as well as the long-term strategic commitments, franchising research should evaluate both concepts separate as well as together.

Possible research directions. As indicated in Fig. 11, our evaluation of the extant literature suggests there has been little integration of the three franchise-specific themes proposed in the suggested typology. An analysis of representative research in our sample showed many studies focused on two of the three dimensions in our typology. For instance, considerable research emphasized franchise systems and strategic commitment (Barthélemy 2008; Michael 2000; Mitsuhashi, Shane, and Sine 2008; Sorenson and Sørensen 2001; Yin and Zajac 2004). However, relatively few studies have examined either the franchise system-consumer exchange or consumer exchange-strategic commitment dimensions simultaneously (Ailawadi and Harlam 2004; Evanschitzky and Wunderlich 2006). This is the result of a noticeable shift toward franchise strategy at the expense of the franchise exchange with consumers.

Thus, the six studies identified with the suggested typology can be considered precursors to the enrichment of franchising research. Each publication focused on one of the typology's 27 possible combinations, thus making them integral examples for future studies. Still, general directions for research can be based on specific aspects of the typology's three themes, as well. Therefore, we suggest research which has integrated each aspect of the typology or has the potential to extend our understanding of each dimension's specific elements.

First, there have been relatively few studies which simultaneously evaluate different franchise structures. Many studies have examined and modeled agent-based relationships (Bruce, Desai, and Staelin 2005; Combs, Ketchen, and Hoover 2004; Iyer and Villas-Boas 2003). Still other research has examined franchise systems with both franchisee- and company-owned outlets (Kalnins 2004a, 2004b; Shane, Shankar, and Aravindakshan 2006; Srinivasan 2006). However, a comparative evaluation of which franchise structures are ideal in particular conditions (e.g., franchisor age, and industry characteristics) has yet to be fully developed. Also, another topic relating to franchise structure has emerged recently to propose the general importance of re-franchising (Castrogiovanni, Combs, and Justis 2006a, 2006b). Directly related to the concept of franchisor purchases and subsequent re-franchising of initially franchised outlets (Ghosh and John 1999; Weaven and Frazer 2007), this topic addresses the

dynamic nature of performance and power in a franchise system. Further examination may be particularly insightful due to recent instability in the marketplace. To reduce the risk of operating franchisor-owned facilities, the strategy of re-franchising may be important for franchisors to minimize losses.

Second, future franchise-related research should incorporate more complete elements of the consumer exchange. There is little doubt that pricing is integral in the franchising context (Chiang, Chhajer, and Hess 2003; Combs, Ketchen, and Hoover 2004; Iyer and Villas-Boas 2003; Shane, Shankar, and Aravindakshan 2006). However, since promotional activity has an influence on the marketplace exchange between the franchise and consumer (Bruce, Desai, and Staelin 2005; Srinivasan 2006), more detailed evaluation of the promotion topic in franchising could be informative. Related to this exchange, a greater emphasis on consumer topics such as perception, satisfaction, perceived value, and outlet atmosphere is required (Chitturi, Raghunathan, and Mahajan 2008; Grünhagen et al. 2008; Kozinets et al. 2004; Oliver 1997; Thompson and Arsel 2004; Thompson et al. 2006). In fact, there is little doubt that a franchise system interfaces with the consumer. By juxtaposing consumer-centric issues with established topics in franchising research, a more complete understanding of consumer experience as well as the franchise system can be accomplished.

Finally, the nature of strategic commitment among franchise system participants is specifically important for examination. Even though many studies have analyzed the implicit indicators of a franchisor's dedication, the role of strategic commitment – be it with an immediate or long-term focus – should be fully articulated. For instance, there may be financial indicators contrasting measures such as liquidity and profitability to measure long-term strategic commitment (Shane, Shankar, and Aravindakshan 2006; Srinivasan 2006). Also, the disaggregation of dedication among franchisors and franchisees must be studied. Specific conditions should rely on the position or power of participants within a franchise network. The nature and alignment of these strategic and relational skills could prove fruitful to research network dynamics in a franchising context (Bruce, Desai, and Staelin 2005; Combs, Michael, and Castrogiovanni 2004; Heide and Wathne 2006).

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