

# Introducing Magnitude Research: A Transformative Framework for Business Studies

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**Abstract** Business research often emphasizes statistical measures, publication counts, and narrowly defined outcomes, which can obscure the broader effects of organizational practices and interventions. Despite methodological rigor, existing studies frequently provide limited insight into long-term, systemic, and multi-level impacts. This study introduces a research framework inspired by Magnitude Thinking, a soft-skill-based cognitive approach designed to evaluate organizational phenomena across five interrelated dimensions: scale, impact, complexity, holism, and accuracy. The framework integrates quantitative, qualitative, and mixed- methods approaches to examine business outcomes' breadth, depth, and systemic interconnections. Building on this perspective, data are conceptualized across multiple contexts, levels, and timeframes to capture interactions between variables, cascading effects, and stakeholder perspectives. The approach allows researchers to assess immediate outcomes, enduring transformations, and cross-organizational implications. Findings suggest that applying this framework generates a more comprehensive understanding of organizational processes, producing methodologically robust, practically actionable, and strategically relevant insights. The study highlights the potential of this framework to guide evidence-based decision-making and improve the evaluation of complex business phenomena.

**Keywords:** *Magnitude thinking, Magnitude research, Business studies, Habermas, Soft skills*

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## 1. Introduction

In the contemporary landscape of business studies, the academic reward system has increasingly prioritized publication metrics, statistical significance, and citation counts as the primary markers of scholarly success. While these conventions have strengthened methodological rigor, a growing body of literature argues they have also fostered a culture that emphasizes these numeric indicators over research outcomes' substantive, real-world impact (Aguinis et al., 2020; Tourish, 2020). Consequently, many studies in management, marketing, and organizational behavior remain confined to surface-level analyses, prioritizing publishability in elite journals over practical applicability, and statistical significance over systemic relevance (Bartunek & Rynes, 2014; Hambrick, 2007). This narrow epistemological focus

often obscures the broader effects and complex consequences of managerial practices, organizational interventions, and policy decisions within interconnected social and business systems.

Magnitude Research (or Mag Research) emerges as a transformative framework that addresses these limitations by shifting the focus from mere occurrence or statistical significance to the true magnitude of phenomena. Inspired by the concept of Magnitude Thinking (Pishghadam, 2025a), Magnitude Research encourages scholars to evaluate organizational and business phenomena along five interrelated dimensions: scale, impact, complexity, holism, and accuracy. Unlike mainstream approaches, which often treat phenomena in isolation or within limited contexts (Tourish, 2020), Magnitude Research integrates multiple perspectives and methods to capture the breadth, depth, and systemic interconnections of real-world outcomes. In doing so, it enables researchers to move beyond the question of “Does it happen?” to the more nuanced inquiry of “To what extent, at what level, and with what complexity does it occur?”

To contextualize this paradigm within broader philosophical traditions, it is useful to revisit Habermas’ (1971, 1972) notion of cognitive interests. The conceptual foundation of Magnitude Research further aligns with broader philosophical perspectives on human inquiry articulated by Habermas, who emphasized the role of cognitive interests (technical, practical, and emancipatory) in shaping research priorities and methods. Magnitude Research extends this framework by introducing a fourth interest: the magnitude interest, a meta-methodological orientation emphasizing proportional evaluation, systemic understanding, and contextual relevance. This allows scholars to integrate quantitative, qualitative, and critical approaches coherently.

Magnitude Research has profound implications for business studies. It enables the assessment of organizational interventions, leadership strategies, and policy innovations for immediate outcomes and their long-term, multi-level, and interdependent effects. By incorporating scale, impact, complexity, holism, and accuracy, researchers can generate methodologically rigorous and practically actionable insights. The present paper explores the theoretical underpinnings, methodological foundations, and practical applications of Magnitude Research in business studies. It highlights the limitations of mainstream research paradigms, demonstrates Magnitude Research’s integrative potential, and illustrates its capacity to produce insights that are both academically robust and socially relevant.

## 2. Research in Business Studies

Business studies include many types of research that try to figure out how businesses work, how people act in them, and how strategic choices affect performance. This discipline derives from various foundations in economics, psychology, and sociology, resulting in a comprehensive framework of investigation (George et al., 2016; Van de Ven, 2007; Whetten, 1989). Even with this variety, mainstream business research has a lot of common methodological patterns that have changed the field’s main body of knowledge in certain ways (Alvesson & Sandberg, 2013; Edmondson & McManus, 2007). These conventions favor specific categories of inquiries and evidence, frequently to the detriment of alternative methodologies that might encapsulate the complete intricacy of organizational existence (Bapuji et al., 2020).

First, survey-based methods are widely used. These methods collect data through standardized questionnaires given to employees, managers, customers, or others in the organization (Bryman & Bell, 2023; Saunders et al., 2020). This method is so popular because it works well; it lets researchers quickly get measurable data from many people, making it great for statistical analysis and testing hypotheses. These tools make things easier and faster, but they might not be as deep or objective. This constraint is evident in the dependence on self-reported perceptions, which are susceptible to social desirability bias, standard method variance, and the disparity between stated intentions and actual behaviors (Podsakoff et al., 2012). Surveys’ structured nature often compels intricate, nuanced attitudes and behaviors into predetermined Likert scales, potentially overlooking essential contextual elements and rich qualitative insights that could arise from interviews or observational techniques (Flick, 2018).

Second, there is a firm reliance on datasets specific to a certain location or situation. Numerous studies utilize data from a singular company, sector, or geographical area, exemplified by research on leadership

styles within a particular technology firm or examining consumer behavior in a specific national market. While this enables profound contextual comprehension and eases access to proprietary or elusive populations, it limits the generalizability of findings across diverse groups (Easterby-Smith et al., 2021; Tsui, 2006). Results derived from a specific corporate culture or regulatory framework may not apply to others, thereby questioning the external validity of the research. This results in a corpus of knowledge that frequently consists of discrete cases rather than a unified, universally applicable theory, complicating the differentiation between principles essential to business and contextual artifacts (Yin, 2017).

Third, business research is frequently structured with brief observational periods. Most studies only look at outcomes right after an intervention, like a training program or a change in leadership. Very few studies look at outcomes more than a few months later (Aguinis & Vandenberg, 2014; Ployhart & Vandenberg, 2010). This short-termism fits with how quickly organizations work and the pressure on academics to publish their results quickly. However, this focus makes it hard to see how effects will last or fade over time. For example, a training program might immediately lead to significant performance improvements. However, these effects might fade after a year if they are not reinforced or the business environment changes. As a result, the field knows more about short-term causes than about long-term processes of growth, strategic evolution, or the lasting effects of business decisions (George et al., 2016).

Fourth, mainstream business research often concentrates on a restricted array of variables, favoring statistical clarity and model simplicity over systemic intricacy. Linear and structural equation models predominate the literature, delineating explicit, testable relationships between independent and dependent variables. However, actual organizations are dynamic and interdependent systems marked by feedback loops, non-linear relationships, and emergent properties (Stacey, 2011; Uhl-Bien & Marion, 2009). By isolating a limited number of variables, researchers may oversimplify phenomena, overlook essential moderating or mediating factors, and fail to recognize the complex, adaptive characteristics of organizations as they respond to internal and external influences. This reductive methodology may yield results that are statistically significant yet managerially simplistic (Hox & Roberts, 2011).

This kind of growth also means we must look at the epistemological interests that drive business research again. Habermas' (1971, 1972) framework can help us understand this. These methodological patterns produce methodologically rigorous research but are limited in scope, frequently catering to a technical interest in prediction and control. While useful for producing actionable, immediately applicable insights, such studies frequently neglect the evolution of business phenomena over time, across levels, and among stakeholder groups. They may overlook the cross-level dynamics among an individual's actions, a team's responses, and an organization's strategic direction, or neglect to address the conflicts between shareholder interests and those of the community or the environment (Bapuji et al., 2020). Consequently, broadening research methodologies to incorporate multi-level, longitudinal, and holistic perspectives is imperative to cultivate a more thorough comprehension of organizations' functioning within increasingly intricate and interrelated global systems. This change would make the field more practical and critical, leading to better interventions and more thought about the bigger picture and the moral implications of business in society.

### 3. Research Interests

Habermas, one of the most influential contemporary social theorists, developed a profound framework for understanding the relationship between knowledge, human interests, and the social sciences. In his seminal work *Knowledge and Human Interests*, Habermas (1971) proposed that all forms of human inquiry are guided by underlying cognitive interests, fundamental orientations that shape how and why knowledge is produced. These interests are not merely psychological motivations but epistemological structures linking knowledge to human life. He identified three such interests: technical, practical, and emancipatory, each corresponding to a distinct form of inquiry and type of science.

The technical interest arises from humanity's need to control and manipulate the natural world. It is associated with the empirical-analytic sciences, such as physics, economics, and management, which seek to generate knowledge for prediction and control (Habermas, 1971). Rooted in instrumental

rationality, this interest emphasizes efficiency, measurement, and objectivity. In organizational contexts, it manifests in performance analytics, productivity models, and data-driven management systems. While valuable, it can narrow inquiry to what is measurable, neglecting social or ethical dimensions.

The practical interest, in contrast, stems from the need for mutual understanding and social coordination. It underpins the historical-hermeneutic sciences, which aim to interpret meaning rather than predict outcomes (Habermas, 1972). This interest reflects the human capacity for communication and shared interpretation, emphasizing that social reality is constructed through interaction and dialogue. In business studies, it appears in research on leadership communication, organizational culture, and consumer perception. Thinkers such as Gadamer (1975) and Ricoeur (1981) expanded this tradition, showing that understanding is always situated within historical and cultural contexts. Habermas advanced this by proposing communicative action as the foundation of social rationality, where genuine consensus arises from reasoned dialogue rather than coercion.

The emancipatory interest represents the most critical form of human inquiry, oriented toward freedom from domination and distortion (Habermas, 1971). This underlies the critical sciences, which challenge power relations and ideologies that constrain human potential. Drawing on Marx, Freud, and the Frankfurt School, Habermas argued that knowledge should not only describe and interpret but also liberate. In organizational studies, this perspective informs critical management, ethical leadership, and corporate social responsibility, promoting transparency, equity, and sustainability (Adler et al., 2007).

While Habermas' (1971) tripartite model explains much of scientific reasoning, it simultaneously bridges empirical, interpretive, and critical traditions, illustrating how inquiry is driven by human purposes. It remains profoundly relevant for contemporary research, reminding us that knowledge is never neutral, it is guided by cognitive and social interests. Building upon this foundation, Magnitude Research introduces a fourth cognitive interest: the magnitude interest, which focuses on proportionality, systemic coherence, and contextual balance. It synthesizes and extends the other three interests, encouraging researchers to examine how large, deep, and interconnected phenomena truly are—linking measurement with meaning and ethical insight.

#### 4. Magnitude Thinking

Magnitude Thinking is an emerging cognitive framework that emphasizes accurate and proportional assessment of reality (Pishghadam, 2025b). It serves as the intellectual foundation for Magnitude Research, offering a structured way of understanding phenomena through awareness of their real scale, depth, and significance. While established frameworks such as critical, creative, or systems thinking each offer valuable perspectives, Magnitude Thinking integrates them by asking not only what happens, but to what extent and with what complexity and accuracy it occurs. It promotes balanced evaluation rather than distorted perception, helping researchers and decision-makers avoid both exaggeration and minimization.

The first dimension of Magnitude Thinking is scale—awareness of size, level, or scope when analyzing a phenomenon. It helps determine whether an issue is local or global, short- or long-term, individual or collective. In business contexts, this dimension enables managers to allocate resources proportionally and recognize that small-scale actions can have large-scale systemic effects. The second dimension, impact, represents the depth and durability of outcomes. It moves beyond surface indicators to capture lasting transformations in behavior, relationships, and culture. Impact thinking aligns with consequential reasoning, emphasizing ripple effects and long-term influence (Pishghadam, 2025a). The third dimension, complexity, acknowledges that real-world systems are rarely linear. Drawing on complexity and chaos theory, it highlights how multiple variables interact dynamically. In organizational research, this awareness fosters adaptive thinking and multi-dimensional analysis. The fourth dimension, holism, encourages perceiving phenomena as integrated wholes rather than fragmented parts. Rooted in systems theory and holistic cognition, it stresses that meaning emerges through relationships and interactions. Holistic thinking integrates emotional, social, and structural dimensions, leading to more inclusive decision-making (Pishghadam, 2025a; Rokhsari, 2025). The fifth dimension, accuracy, refers to perceiving phenomena without distortion, exaggeration, or omission. It

balances subjective insight with objective evidence to achieve a fair and truthful understanding. Cognitive biases often cause magnification or minimization of experiences; Magnitude Thinking counteracts these through disciplined reflection and evidence-based evaluation. These five cognitive dimensions not only structure individual perception but also provide the conceptual scaffolding for a new approach to research, Magnitude Research. Together, these dimensions enable researchers to judge not only whether something is important but how important it truly is, and in what context.

## 5. Introducing Magnitude Research

Magnitude Research (or Mag Research) is introduced as a meta-paradigm that extends beyond the traditional boundaries of positivist, interpretive, and critical approaches to inquiry. It focuses on evaluating the scale, impact, complexity, holism, and accuracy of phenomena across contexts, timeframes, and systems. Magnitude Research grows from the philosophical foundation of Magnitude Thinking (Pishghadam, 2025a, 2025b, 2025c), which emphasizes balanced and accurate assessment. It challenges conventional research where “significance” is often reduced to statistical or citation-based indicators. In contrast, it captures real-world relevance—how phenomena unfold and persist across multiple levels of organizational systems.

As previously noted in Habermas’ (1971, 1972) framework, the technical, practical, and emancipatory interests correspond to predictive, interpretive, and transformative aims of research. Magnitude Research builds on these by adding the magnitude interest, focusing on evaluating the breadth, depth, and interrelation of phenomena to contextualize knowledge production based on its true systemic resonance. The magnitude interest is meta-methodological; it integrates quantitative, qualitative, and critical methods as needed to measure proportional influence effectively. Rather than adhering to a single epistemology, it draws from multiple traditions to capture dynamic and evolving relationships within organizations. Techniques such as multi-level modeling, longitudinal analysis, mixed-methods triangulation, and system mapping become central to identifying the interconnected nature of phenomena.

**Figure 1**

*The Five-Dimensional Framework of Magnitude Research*

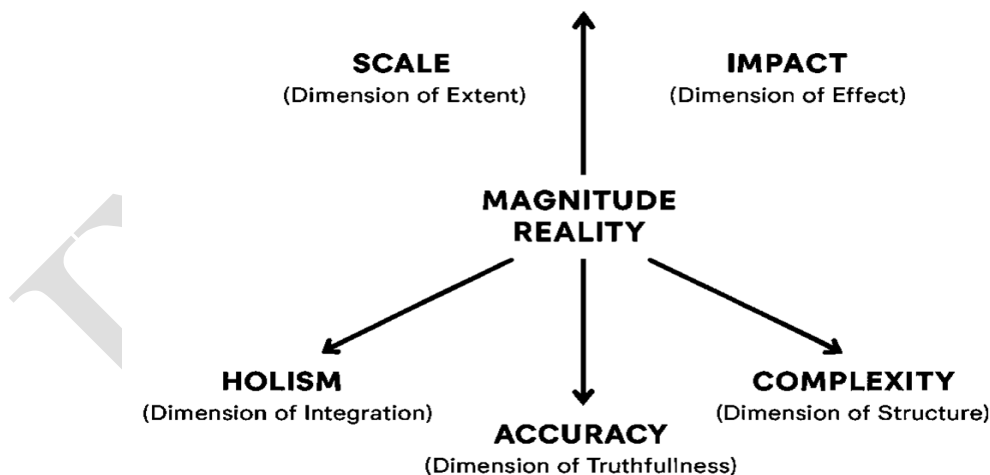


Figure 1 depicts the five interrelated dimensions, i.e., scale, impact, complexity, holism, and accuracy, that structure the Magnitude Research framework. Together, they enable proportional, systemic, and context-sensitive evaluation of organizational and business realities. Each dimension plays a distinct role in shaping this integrative vision: Scale explores the reach of a phenomenon, assessing whether its effects are localized or globally influential. Impact considers the depth and durability of outcomes, distinguishing short-term shifts from lasting transformations. Complexity captures non-linear, multi-causal interactions among variables that characterize real-world systems. Holism ensures understanding of phenomena in their entirety, incorporating multiple data sources and stakeholder perspectives.



Accuracy secures validity and reliability through triangulation, replication, and verification across contexts.

Magnitude Research thus functions as a meta-paradigm for contemporary inquiry, enabling proportional, multi-level, and evidence-based understanding of real-world phenomena (see Table 1 for types of research). It is a guiding framework that determines what should be measured and how findings should be interpreted. It transcends methodological loyalty, emphasizing coherent and proportional understanding of complex systems. This framework also clarifies its relationship with pragmatism, which underpins mixed-methods research (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). While pragmatism focuses on what “works” to answer a research question, Magnitude Research emphasizes how large and interconnected phenomena are. It uses multi-method integration not merely to solve problems but to assess the magnitude of both problems and solutions over time and across contexts. For example, a pragmatic study on remote work might ask, “Does remote work improve productivity in a financial services firm?” A Magnitude Research approach would instead ask, “How large, deep, and interconnected are the effects of remote work across industries and cultures?” It would evaluate scale (cross-sector scope), impact (short- and long-term effects), complexity (interaction with digital infrastructure and leadership), holism (integration of stakeholder perspectives), and accuracy (cross-cultural validation).

**Table 1**  
*Research Types and Their Methodological Alignments*

Research Type	Methodological Orientation	Purpose/Focus
Technical / Positivist Research	Mostly Quantitative	Predictive
Practical / Hermeneutic Research	Mostly Qualitative	Interpretive
Critical / Emancipatory Research	Mostly Qualitative	Transformative
Pragmatic / Mixed-Methods Research	Mostly Mixed	Functional
Magnitude Research	Mixed / Meta-methodological	Comprehensive

The Magnitude Spectrum (Figure 2) represents a continuum that classifies research according to its comprehensiveness across the five dimensions. Low Magnitude Research (Inner Level): Focuses narrowly on isolated variables, often within a single context. For instance, studying the correlation between salary and job satisfaction among 30 employees. While statistically valid, it lacks systemic insight and generalizability. Mid Magnitude Research (Middle Level): Demonstrates moderate integration across contexts and variables, but with partial scope. For example, investigating leadership style and employee satisfaction within one organization using reliable surveys. High Magnitude Research (Outer Level): Integrates large-scale, multi-context data, embraces complexity, and ensures accuracy via triangulation. A high-magnitude study might, for instance, analyze leadership, emotional intelligence, and culture across multiple countries and industries, combining quantitative and qualitative methods.

**Figure 2**  
*The Magnitude Spectrum of Research*

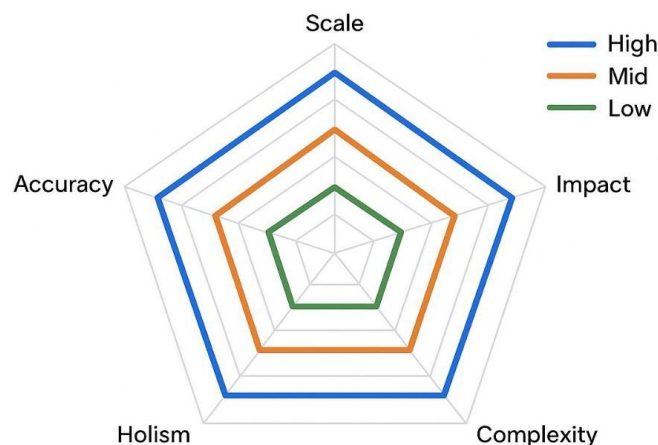


Figure 2 visualizes how research expands from low to high magnitude as integration increases across the five dimensions (i.e., scale, impact, complexity, holism, and accuracy). The outermost ring represents research with the greatest systemic depth and contextual validity. The radar or concentric chart metaphorically demonstrates how research magnitude expands outward, from narrow, reductionist studies to holistic, integrative ones, reflecting the growth of analytical depth and contextual understanding. Such visualization tools also help researchers and practitioners diagnose the comprehensiveness of their studies, positioning their work along the magnitude continuum.

## 6. Differences Between Mainstream and Magnitude Research

Mainstream research, whether quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods, typically operates within limited dimensions of inquiry. Quantitative studies often emphasize statistical relationships among a small number of variables, prioritizing numerical precision, hypothesis testing, and measurable significance. While this approach produces methodological rigor, it tends to narrow the scope of inquiry, focusing on immediate or short-term effects and often ignoring contextual or systemic factors (Alvesson & Sandberg, 2013). Qualitative research, by contrast, delves deeply into meaning, context, and lived experience but often lacks the ability to generalize findings or to quantify the scope and endurance of phenomena. Mixed-methods research aims to combine these strengths but frequently remains limited to partial integration, juxtaposing rather than synthesizing findings from different data types. Magnitude Research directly addresses these limitations by examining phenomena simultaneously across five interrelated dimensions: scale, impact, complexity, holism, and accuracy. It expands the boundaries of inquiry beyond isolated measures or localized samples, seeking to understand not only whether a phenomenon occurs but also to what extent, at what levels, and with what systemic interconnectedness it unfolds.

**Table 2**

*Mainstream Research vs. Magnitude Research across Five Dimensions*

Dimension	Mainstream Research	Magnitude Research
<b>Scale (Length)</b>	Focuses on a single context or level (e.g., one firm or department).	Extends across multiple levels, contexts, or systems (e.g., industry, national, or cultural scales).
<b>Impact (Height)</b>	Short-term assessment emphasizing immediate results.	Multi-temporal assessment distinguishing short-, mid-, and long-term outcomes.
<b>Complexity (Width)</b>	Seeks linear explanations, reducing variables for clarity.	Embraces nonlinearity, interdependence, and systemic feedback loops.
<b>Holism</b>	Relies on a single methodological or theoretical perspective.	Integrates multiple paradigms and data forms for multi-perspective synthesis.
<b>Accuracy</b>	Ensures internal validity within a limited scope; generalization is secondary.	Balances internal and external validity through triangulation and contextual replication.

While mainstream research provides valuable insights, it often captures only a segment of a much larger phenomenon. Magnitude Research, in contrast, integrates these dimensions into a coherent analytical system that reflects how organizational and social processes evolve across multiple contexts and timeframes. Rather than simply identifying whether a variable exerts an effect, it evaluates the *extent*, *duration*, and *interdependence* of that effect. This broader orientation transforms the very aim of inquiry. Instead of asking, “Does it work?” Magnitude Research asks, “To what degree, and through which interrelated pathways, does it work, and for whom, where, and over how long?” It thus links quantitative precision with qualitative understanding, achieving a methodological balance that reveals both the depth and breadth of organizational realities. This contrast becomes clearer when applied to a concrete organizational scenario.

## 7. Example: Evaluating the Impact of Employee Training Programs on Productivity

To illustrate the differences between mainstream research and Magnitude Research, consider the case of evaluating employee training programs, one of the most established topics in organizational inquiry

aimed at enhancing productivity, engagement, and performance. A conventional quantitative study might assess the effectiveness of a new leadership training program using a pre–post design within a single organization. For instance, a company could implement a training initiative for 50 mid-level managers and measure productivity before and after the intervention through key performance indicators such as project completion rates, sales metrics, or performance ratings. Statistical analyses, such as paired *t*-tests or ANOVA, would then be applied to determine whether any observed change is statistically significant.

Although this mainstream design is methodologically rigorous, its scope remains narrow across several critical dimensions. It typically examines a single organization or department, which limits the generalizability of its findings. The impact is often assessed over a short period, perhaps a few weeks or months, without evaluating whether the improvements endure over time. Complexity tends to be simplified: outcomes are attributed to the training itself, while other influential factors, such as organizational culture, leadership support, or external conditions, are overlooked. Holism is also constrained, as most conventional studies rely solely on numerical outputs, neglecting the subjective perspectives of employees, supervisors, or other stakeholders. Even when such research demonstrates internal validity, its conclusions remain highly context-dependent and difficult to apply beyond the specific organization being studied.

This type of investigation effectively answers the narrow question, “Does the training program improve productivity?” but fails to illuminate the extent, depth, and sustainability of that improvement, or the systemic conditions that enable or constrain it. A Magnitude Research approach, by contrast, reconceptualizes the same inquiry through proportional and multi-dimensional design. Instead of studying one firm, it would extend analysis across multiple organizations, industries, or even countries. Such broader coverage allows the researcher to examine how variations in structure, culture, and market conditions shape training outcomes, revealing both consistent and context-dependent effects.

Temporal layering is another critical feature of this approach. Magnitude Research differentiates among short-, mid-, and long-term outcomes, measuring productivity immediately after training, six months later, and one year afterward. This longitudinal perspective distinguishes transient improvements from sustained transformations and exposes secondary effects often neglected in short-term evaluations, such as increased engagement, retention, and leadership development.

Equally important is its embrace of complexity. Recognizing that organizational performance seldom results from linear causality, Magnitude Research examines how multiple interacting factors (such as participant motivation, managerial support, or economic volatility) jointly influence outcomes. Techniques like multi-level modeling, hierarchical linear modeling, or network analysis capture these interdependencies, providing a dynamic picture of how training interventions operate within real systems rather than isolated conditions.

Holism also plays a defining role. Where mainstream studies restrict themselves to quantitative metrics, Magnitude Research integrates both quantitative and qualitative evidence. Surveys and performance indicators are complemented by interviews, focus groups, and field observations, offering a multi-perspective view of organizational change. Employees, for example, might describe how the training enhanced their sense of empowerment or improved team cohesion—factors invisible in numerical data but essential to long-term effectiveness. Accuracy, in this context, is achieved through triangulation and cross-validation. By comparing results across different organizations, industries, and timeframes, researchers minimize contextual bias and strengthen both internal and external validity. Replication across diverse datasets ensures that outcomes reflect genuine behavioral and systemic patterns rather than artifacts of a particular measurement tool or situational context. The result is a body of evidence that is not only statistically reliable but also practically trustworthy and theoretically coherent.

Such an approach fundamentally reframes the research question itself. Under mainstream logic, a study might ask, “Does the leadership training program improve productivity among 50 managers in Company X?” Under Magnitude Research, the question becomes, “To what extent, across what contexts, and through which interacting mechanisms does the leadership training program affect productivity, engagement, and retention over time?” This shift moves inquiry from the pursuit of



statistical significance to the pursuit of magnitude, acknowledging that even a statistically significant result may hold limited or transient practical value.

Consider, for example, a scenario where the conventional study reports a 10% increase in productivity following training and declares success. A Magnitude Research design could reveal that productivity gains vary by sector and persist only in organizations that provide post-training mentoring or maintain supportive cultures. It might also uncover that engagement and retention improve more substantially than raw productivity, suggesting that the true value of training lies in relational and motivational domains rather than immediate performance metrics.

In this way, Magnitude Research deepens understanding by mapping the systemic influence of interventions rather than testing their isolated effects. Instead of stopping at evidence of statistical improvement, it explores how training interacts with communication networks, leadership styles, digital infrastructures, and team dynamics to shape a layered outcome profile. Hierarchical modeling might show that productivity improvements are amplified in teams led by participative managers but diminish under rigid hierarchies. Network analysis might reveal that behavioral change spreads through informal social ties rather than formal reporting lines, implying that peer interaction, not structural control, sustains learning transfer. Qualitative interviews could contextualize these findings, illustrating how employees perceive fairness, usefulness, and the adaptability of the new skills.

Through such integration, Magnitude Research uncovers why and under what conditions certain effects persist or fade, rather than merely whether they exist. By combining longitudinal performance data, multi-source feedback, and interpretive accounts, it captures the full systemic form of an intervention's magnitude. The result is a holistic mosaic of interrelated evidence showing how micro-level changes (such as individual learning and motivation) aggregate into macro-level outcomes, including cultural adaptation and organizational resilience. Ultimately, Magnitude Research transforms discrete findings into interconnected knowledge. It turns evaluation into understanding, causation into interaction, and significance into proportion. By revealing the layered structure of organizational impact, it provides business researchers and practitioners with a framework capable of explaining not only what works, but how, for whom, and under what evolving conditions it continues to work.

## 8. Concluding Remarks

The conceptualization of Magnitude Research signals not merely a theoretical expansion in business studies but an epistemological correction to the contemporary condition of research itself. In a scholarly ecosystem increasingly shaped by datafication and competitive output metrics, the act of inquiry risks becoming detached from the moral and systemic realities it seeks to understand (Pfeffer, 2022). Magnitude Research responds to this condition by re-establishing proportion—the alignment between the scale of knowledge and the complexity of the world.

Rather than offering another methodological alternative, Magnitude Research represents a recalibration of epistemic consciousness. It redefines knowledge production as an integrative process in which methodological choices are guided not by convenience or trend, but by ethical proportionality. This framework thus situates research as a moral practice, echoing the call of Tsoukas (2017) for a “practical reason” in management studies—one that values understanding over measurement and dialogue over domination. A key innovation of Magnitude Research lies in its commitment to epistemic integrity, ensuring that research outcomes correspond proportionally to the phenomena under investigation. This stance challenges the persistent asymmetry between the size of organizational systems and the narrowness of empirical lenses used to examine them (Bansal et al., 2018). By framing magnitude as both cognitive and structural, the model provides scholars with a vocabulary for articulating not just validity and reliability, but depth, resonance, and systemic coherence.

From a meta-theoretical perspective, this framework represents the maturation of what Ghoshal (2005) envisioned as a “reflexive turn” in management science, a movement away from detached abstraction toward human-centered inquiry. Magnitude Research embodies this turn by reconciling empirical rigor with interpretive sensitivity and ethical accountability, establishing what Pettigrew (2019) calls contextualized research excellence.

The implications extend beyond academia. In a world of accelerating complexity, business organizations increasingly require decision frameworks that capture non-linear causality, multi-level interactions, and cross-cultural variability (Kurtz & Snowden, 2003). Magnitude Research provides the intellectual scaffolding for such analysis, helping leaders and policymakers interpret systemic feedback loops rather than isolated outcomes. This capacity for anticipatory sensemaking becomes essential for sustainability-oriented governance and adaptive strategy. Equally important is the framework's contribution to epistemic justice—the fair inclusion of diverse voices, contexts, and methodologies in knowledge creation (Fricker, 2015; Mertens, 2020). By emphasizing holism and proportional representation, Magnitude Research resists the marginalization of non-dominant epistemologies and opens the field to pluralistic worldviews, including indigenous, feminist, and global South perspectives. It reframes research inclusivity not as tokenism but as a structural requirement for proportional truth.

Pedagogically, Magnitude Research offers a roadmap for reshaping doctoral and executive education. As Shotter and Tsoukas (2014) argue, management learning must evolve from “knowing-about” to “knowing-with”, a participatory engagement with living systems. Training scholars in magnitude thinking cultivates reflexivity, cognitive balance, and ethical foresight, equipping them to design inquiries that are at once context-sensitive and globally responsible (Pishghadam, 2025a; Rokhsari, 2025). Moreover, the framework suggests new evaluation paradigms for academic institutions. Instead of valuing research quantity, universities could assess the *magnitude* of scholarly contributions, measuring their systemic influence, interdisciplinarity, and long-term societal relevance (Bapuji et al., 2020). Such reform would realign academic prestige with substantive impact, addressing the growing disconnect between publication volume and social value identified by Tourish (2020).

Finally, Magnitude Research contributes to a broader intellectual project: the reintegration of science, ethics, and wisdom in organizational inquiry. It restores the moral dimension of scholarship, positioning proportional understanding as both an epistemic virtue and a social responsibility. Through its five interrelated dimensions, understood here as analytical orientations rather than methodological categories, it enables researchers to perceive organizations as living systems whose truths are always relational, contingent, and multi-scalar. In this way, Magnitude Research does not seek to replace existing paradigms but to synthesize them through proportionate awareness. Its transformative promise lies in fostering a culture of inquiry that is rigorous yet reflective, global yet situated, and quantitative yet humane. As the world faces unprecedented complexity, from digital acceleration to ecological fragility, researchers must learn to think in magnitude, to interpret not only what changes, but how widely, deeply, and responsibly that change unfolds. Last but not least, while Magnitude Thinking emphasizes accurate and holistic assessment of scale, impact, and complexity, its opposite, Maltitude Thinking, reflects a biased or distorted evaluation of these elements. Such distortion can lead to misinterpretation, ineffective decisions, and counterproductive behaviours. Given its potential influence on academic, professional, and social judgments, Maltitude Thinking emerges as an important construct that warrants further investigation in future studies.

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