



A Research Study on the Technologies Used for Working Capital Management

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Abstract:

In order to run their operations and reach their goals, businesses of all sizes rely on financial resources. Money is so crucial in modern business that it is often referred to as the "lifeblood" of a company. No business can achieve its goals without sufficient funding. Therefore, this project is about researching the many facets of working capital management that are critical for running the business on a daily basis. Two major issues arise when the company manages its working capital: We must first determine the ideal levels of cash, accounts receivable, and inventory for a company to keep on hand, taking into account the sales level and pertinent cost factors. A second question is how to most economically fund these working capital investments, given these ideal amounts. Firms should finance with the cheapest accessible sources of capital and should not hold any unproductive assets if they want to achieve the greatest possible results. Why? Generally speaking, investing in short-term assets and financing short-term liabilities are highly beneficial for the firm. Both before and during the research, the study's scope is defined. Practical application of the study's theoretical aspects into real-world work experience was the primary aim of the research. Working capital research relies on ratio analysis and working capital statement of changes as its foundational tools.

Keywords: working capital, management technologies, economical way, proper management, financial planning, short-term obligations, capital management

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1. Introduction

Any company's long-term success and survival depend on its working capital. Because they can't pay their short-term bills when they're due, many businesses have to shut down. A company's ability to keep operating depends on how well it handles its working capital [1]. There is a positive correlation between a company's liquidity, financial health, and risk management practises and its management of working capital. Learn the basics of working capital and how to manage it in this introductory course [2-7]. In this class, we'll take a look at why working capital management is important and how to determine what variables really dictate how much money you'll need. Working capital needs estimation is another topic covered in this course on financial planning. At last, this class will go over a few of the most important ways to get money for working capital. An accountant's and finance manager's primary responsibility is the oversight and management of working capital, which is crucial to any business. Investments in short-term assets, sometimes referred to as current assets on balance sheets, are what we mean when we talk about working capital, the generally accepted descriptive phrase for these resources (in practice, of course, all capital is working, whether invested in fixed or current assets) [8-14]. So, working capital includes things like cash on hand, short-term

investments, accounts receivable (debtors), and inventory (stocks). (The terminology used synonymously throughout this book are those in brackets, which indicate different descriptions of the item.) Aside from making sure these assets are run efficiently, the finance manager's main focus will be on how to finance them. In this, the financial manager will encounter a plethora of long-term and short-term alternative sources [15-21].

Current liabilities are the usual place to find short-term finance, which includes things like bank overdrafts and supplier credit. Working capital management include not only the management of current assets but also the efficient financing of those assets through short-term obligations [22-27]. You will find the following terms helpful while reading the book: Gross working capital is the sum of all current assets; net working capital is the sum of all current assets minus current liabilities; and working capital is a broad word. While certain textbooks may use alternative terminology, this is what most people agree on [28-31]. Working capital is often referred to as "circulating capital" or "circulating assets." This definition is derived from the firm's short-term cash cycle, which will be discussed later. The cash cycle encompasses all assets over the long run, which might make this language difficult to understand. This is why the term "circulating assets" is avoided [32-37].

The difference between current assets and current liabilities is the net working capital. A company's current assets are its short-term holdings that are put to use in the sale of goods and services [38-41]. The general consensus is that anything falls under this category if it is anticipated to be turned into cash within a year. Although many companies' assets, like investments, are in a readily realisable form, they plan to retain them for the long term. These aren't really current assets, but they can be useful for managing working capital since they can be turned into cash quickly. What follows is a list of the most important parts of current assets. Stocks or inventory [42-47]. Inventories consist of all the raw materials, commodities, and completed items that a company keeps on hand for use in manufacturing or for sale as a finished good as part of regular business operations. Products at various stages of production, as well as raw materials, purchased components, completed goods, and products in transit, are all considered inventory (known as work in progress). Parties owing money or owed money by other businesses [48-55]. These obligations are owed to the company over a shorter period of time. Accounts receivable are a common way for manufacturing and commercial businesses to track the credit that their sales customers have extended to them. Expenses and prepayments are made in advance. The goods or services have not yet been received, but the expenses have already been paid for [56-61].

Short-term investments. Investments in assets with an anticipated rate of return, such as interest or capital appreciation, are common ways for businesses to use their short-term excess cash [62-65]. The amount of this return might be certain, like deposits with the local government, or uncertain, like stock market fluctuations (equity shares). Investments made with an eye on the future will not show up in a company's existing assets, and its management will remain distinct from those investments [66-71].

Issues with managing current assets, current liabilities, and the link between the two are the focus of working capital management. Assets that, in the normal course of business, can be or will be turned into cash within one year without suffering a loss in value and without interfering with the firm's activities are called current assets. Investments in marketable securities, cash on hand, accounts receivable, and stock on hand are the chief current assets [72-76]. The term "current liabilities" refers to debts that, from the moment they are created, are meant to be settled out of the current assets or profits of the company within a year, as part of the regular business operations. Payments owing, bills to pay, bank overdraft, and unpaid costs make up the essential components of current liabilities [77-81]. Keeping a sufficient amount of working capital is the primary objective of working capital management. This is achieved by carefully monitoring and controlling the firm's assets and liabilities. This is due to the fact that facing insolvency

or bankruptcy is a real possibility for any business that fails to maintain an adequate amount of operating capital. If it wants to be reasonably safe, its existing assets should be more than adequate to cover its current liabilities [82-89]. The firm's liquidity can be preserved by efficiently managing all of its current assets, while ensuring that none of them are kept at excessive levels. For optimal acquisition and utilisation of all short-term funding sources, constant management is required [90-95].

Management theory for working capital focuses on the relationship between current assets and current liabilities. Both before and during the research, the study's scope is defined. Practical application of the study's theoretical aspects into real-world work experience was the primary aim of the research. Working capital research relies on ratio analysis and working capital statement of changes as its foundational tools [96-101].

The researcher has decided to conduct this study in order to address a research gap and meet the expectations of management.

This study is necessary because management is interested in learning if the yearly working capital requirement has gone up or down; if the report comes back negative, they want to know what factors contributed to the decrease in working capital.

1.1. Literature review

The relationships between working capital management and a company's profitability have been shown in several sorts of prior study in various contexts.

The term "working capital management" describes the process of overseeing a company's present and short-term assets, such as its inventory, debtors, investments, cash on hand, and other liquid assets. Creditors, borrowed funds, trade advances, and provisions are all examples of short-term liabilities. Companies should avoid risk through careful working capital management, but the main focus is on short-term assets because that's where short-term liabilities originate [106-109].

This link was examined using data from 131 listed firms between 2002 and 2005. According to regression analysis, the cash conversion cycle was significantly related to profitability as evaluated by gross operating profit. Managers, according to those findings, can increase shareholder value by optimising the cash conversion cycle and all of its constituent parts. Days, cash conversion cycle, and profitability are all important metrics to consider. In addition, they found a positive correlation between business size (as assessed by the natural logarithm of sales) and profitability [110].

How newly public firms handle their working capital affects their operational performance and growth. Working capital's connection to debt levels, firm risk, and industry is also clarified by the research. Using data from a subset of IPOs, the research shows that better operational performance is positively correlated with larger accounts receivable levels. The research goes on to say that keeping tabs on inventory, fixed assets, accounts, and cash and securities (i.e., keeping numbers low) is essential [111].

As we've already established, a company's ability to stay afloat depends on its working capital, which in turn is highly dependent on its sales volume. In order to keep its operational or functional activities running, the company needs current assets. In this context, "current assets" refer to things like receivables, inventories, and liquid cash, all of which can be quickly turned into cash, typically within a year [112-115].

According to the research, several sectors have vastly diverse finance practises and working capital needs. Firm profitability was also inversely related to the aggressiveness with which working capital investment and finance programmes were formulated, according to regression results [116].

For this study, we used data from 88 companies that were listed on the New York Stock Exchange between 2006 and 2015. Profitability, as evaluated by gross operating profit, was found to be statistically related to the cash conversion cycle [117].

The correlations between these factors are very negative, according to his findings.

This means that when the cash conversion cycle gets longer, profitability goes down. Additionally, it has been discovered that reducing the days of accounts receivable and inventories reduces profitability [118].

As a result of reducing the quantity of working capital compared to sales, it has been shown that most organisations enhance the profit and loss margin. However, businesses must boost their working capital if they wish to enhance their liquidity. The policy's implementation necessitates a reduction in sales, which in turn reduces profitability. To achieve this goal, 30 companies situated in the UK and listed on the London Stock Exchange were chosen. The measurement period included the years 2007 through 2009. Profitability was examined in relation to working capital. This study examined the effects of working capital management metrics including average days of payment, inventory turnover, average collection period, net operational profitability, and quick ratios and current ratios on businesses in the United Kingdom [119-121].

Through an examination of the fixed effects regression models, his research yielded specific conclusions. To begin, the more time it takes for a company to receive payment from its clients, the lower its production will be. What this means is that, in comparison to less profitable businesses, more profitable ones take less time to collect payment from clients. Second, the firm's profitability is positively correlated with the time it takes to sell an item's inventory from the time it was brought in. Businesses and other organisations can save money on production interruption expenses and, more often than not, business losses caused by insufficient inventory if they take their time keeping stock on hand. The condition lowers the firm's operational cost. The third premise of the study was that there is a positive correlation between the average payment duration and profitability [122-126].

Profitability rises in direct proportion to the time required to pay out debtors. The modern definition of finance in our economy is the availability of funds when needed. In order to run their operations and reach their goals, businesses of all sizes rely on financial resources. Actually, money is so crucial in today's world that it's sometimes referred to as the essence of a business. It is not surprising that cash is a key performance indicator because of the vital role it plays in the company. Because of this, it is essential for businesses to be run in an efficient and profitable manner. This may lead to an asset-liability mismatch, which could boost short-term profits but ultimately put the company at risk of bankruptcy [127-131].

As an alternative, profitability will suffer if liquidity is overemphasised. Thus, in order to maximise the firm's value, the management of a corporate entity must achieve the desired tradeoff between profitability and liquidity. As a result of the ever-changing nature of working capital management, it is essential that financial and other functional managers maintain open lines of communication. It is impossible for the financial manager to fix the working capital problem on his or her alone. Scholars and researchers have recently conducted a number of case studies on working capital management in order to examine various experts in the field. These studies have helped to shed light on the technical gaps in the management activities of the companies in question and have also provided new ideas, techniques, and methods for effective working capital management [132-137].

2. Method

A research methodology is the set of steps used to conduct a study or project. The methodology provides a detailed account of the study's procedures, outlining their order and providing enough explanation to reach an accurate representation of the goal and scope.

2.1. Research design

The goal of a well-designed research study is to gather and analyse data in a way that is both efficient and relevant to the research question. To put it another way, research design is the framework that binds a research project's various parts together [102-105]. In order to concisely summarise a complicated design structure, we frequently use brief notation when describing designs. Consideration of the following elements is typically included in developing a research design that is suited for a specific research problem:

- 1) The means of obtaining information.
- 2) The availability and skills of the researcher and his staff.
- 3) The objective of the problem is to be studied.
- 4) The nature of the problem is to be studied.
- 5) The availability of time and money for the research work.

3. Ratio Analysis

Ratios of a company's financial health and performance are helpful metrics to track. The financial statements contain enough information to compute the majority of ratios. One way to examine trends is by comparing the company's financials to those of other companies using financial ratios. Ratio analysis can foretell insolvency in certain instances. The data provided by financial ratios allows for their categorization. The following ratio types see regular use:

3.1. Current ratio

You may learn a lot about a company's ability to pay its short-term bills by looking at its liquidity ratio. Those providing the company with short-term credit will find them particularly interesting. The current ratio, also known as the working capital ratio, and the quick ratio are two commonly used liquidity ratios.

The current ratio is the ratio of current assets to current liabilities:

$$\text{Current ratio} = \frac{\text{Current assets}}{\text{Current liabilities}} \quad (1)$$

A high current ratio is preferred by short-term creditors due to the reduced risk it provides. The goal of a lower current ratio is to direct a larger portion of the firm's assets toward growth, which is something that shareholders may find appealing. Typical levels for the current ratio in order to remain solvent during downturns.

3.2. Quick ratio

The current ratio has the potential downside of include inventory with many ems that are hard to sell fast and have unknown inventory values in current assets. Cash, accounts receivable, and notes receivable are the current assets utilised in the quick ratio. Subtracting inventory from current assets yields these assets. The acid test is another name for the fast ratio.

3.3. Cash ratio

Last but not least, the cash ratio is the most conservative liquidity ratio; it does not include any current assets other than cash and cash equivalents, which are the most liquid. Here is the definition of the cash ratio:

$$\text{Cash ratio} = \frac{\text{Cash} + \text{Marketable securities}}{\text{Current liabilities}} \quad (2)$$

The cash ratio shows how quickly a company can pay its current liabilities if

money were needed right now.

3.4. Inventory turnover ratio

The number of times stock is turned over, or sold, during the year is indicated by the inventory turnover ratio. Here we can see how well a company's sales and inventory management are working together. Sales are strong, inventory turns over quickly, and stock levels are low when the ratio is high. A stalling company or one with a lot of inventory would have a low stock turnover ratio.

$$\text{Inventory turnover ratio} = \frac{\text{Net sales}}{\text{Closing inventory}} \quad (3)$$

3.5. Debtors turnover ratio

The turnover ratio for debtors is a measure of how quickly a company collects payments. This ratio determines the frequency of receivables (debtors) turnover over a specific time frame.

$$\text{Debtors turnover ratio} = \frac{\text{Net sales}}{\text{Average debtors}} \quad (4)$$

3.6. Creditors turnover ratio

One measure of the frequency of debt repayment within a given year is the creditor's turnover ratio. What follows is the formula for calculating this ratio.

$$\text{Creditors turnover ratio} = \frac{\text{Net purchases}}{\text{Average creditors}} \quad (5)$$

The turnover of working capital in a year is shown by this ratio. How well a company makes use of its working capital is reflected in this ratio. When the ratio is high, working capital is being used efficiently; when it is low, the opposite is true. But no business is doing well when their working capital turnover rate is extremely high.

$$\text{Working capital turnover ratio} = \frac{\text{Net sales}}{\text{Net working capital}} \quad (5)$$

The time it takes for a business to pay for its materials, wages, and other operating expenses is a key component of its working capital cycle. The time it takes for a business to move from paying for raw materials to receiving payment for completed goods is known as the working capital cycle, often called the operational cycle. Everything that happens during the operational cycle, also known as working capital, is listed here.

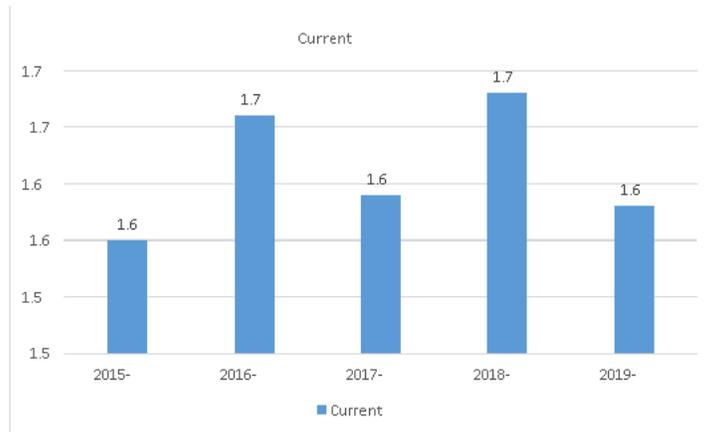


Figure 1. The current ratio seems to be fluctuating between the year 2017 to 2021

From 2017 through 2021, the present ratio appears to be fluctuating, as seen in Figure 1. As a result of rising current liabilities in 2021, the current ratio falls from its high point in 2020.

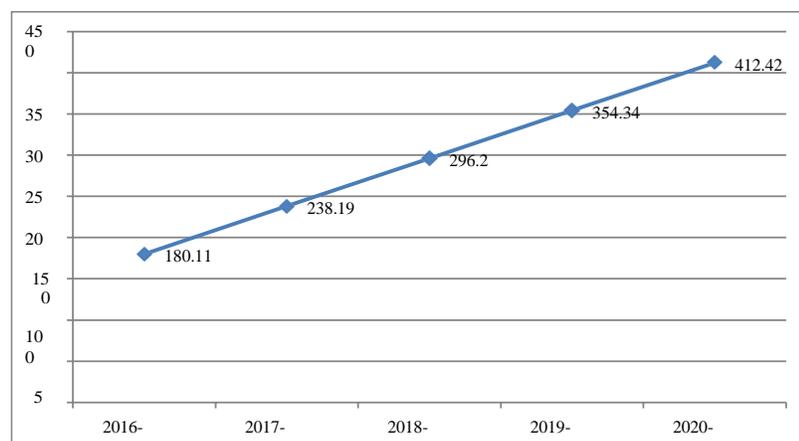


Figure 2. Net working capital

Throughout all five years, the capital for networking has been steadily rising (Figure 2). In 2021, with a total of 412.424, the company's Net WC is the highest. Since costs were gradually reduced throughout the first three years, the trend is seen as increasing at a rapid pace. After looking at the trend for 2021, we saw that it was going up to 470.50.

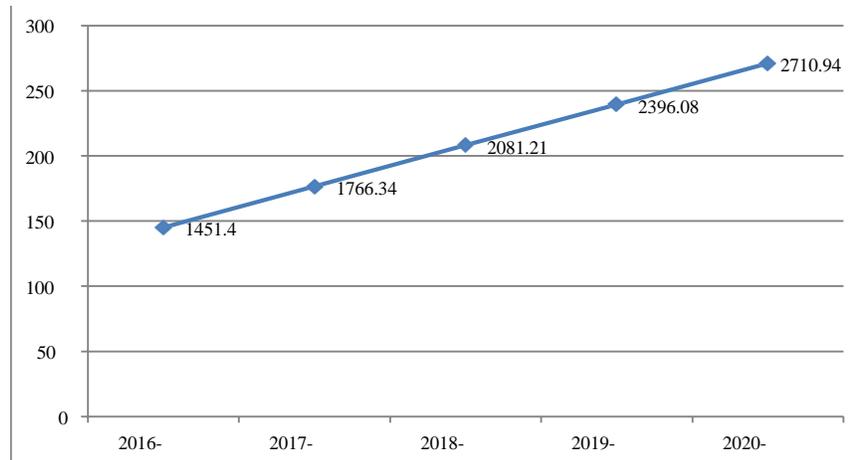


Figure 3. Net sales

Over the past five years, net sales have been steadily rising (Figure 3). In 2021, the company's net sales reached an all-time high of 412.424. Since costs were gradually reduced throughout the first three years, the trend is seen as increasing at a rapid pace. The trend was determined to be increasing at a pace of 470.501 in 2021, according to the analysis.

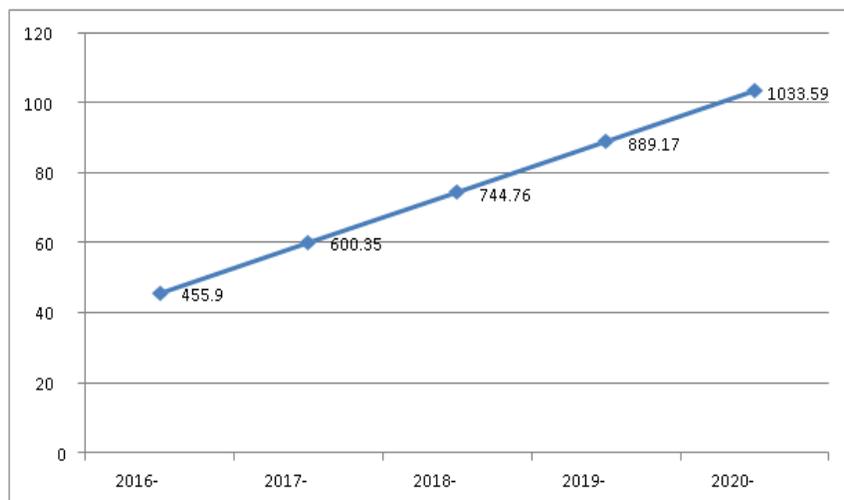


Figure 4. Current Assets

The current assets have shown a consistent upward trend over the past five years (Figure 4). By 2021, the firm's current assets had risen to 412.424, the highest level ever. Since costs were gradually reduced throughout the first three years, the trend is seen as increasing at a rapid pace. The trend was determined to be increasing at a pace of 470.501 in 2021, according to the analysis. Throughout all five years, the capital for networking has been steadily rising. In 2021, with a total of 412.424, the company's Net WC is the highest. Since costs were gradually reduced throughout the first three years, the trend is seen as increasing at a rapid pace. After looking at the trend for 2021, we see that it's going up to 470.501 percent [138].

To calculate the potential profit from an investment in a business, analysts and financiers use the weighted average cost of capital (WACC). The cost of capital is a key metric for evaluating a company's profitability prospects since most companies rely on borrowed funds to operate. In contrast to weighted average cost of capital (WACC), which only considers debt when calculating a company's cost of capital, weighted

average cost of equity takes equity into account as well [139]. An approach to calculating a company's cost of capital that takes into account the relative importance of different types of capital is known as the weighted average cost of capital (WACC). A weighted average cost of capital (WACC) takes into account all debt and equity financing options. To derive the weighted average cost of capital (WACC), you multiply the costs of debt and equity by their respective weights in relation to market value, and then you add it all up. The equity cost can be determined through the use of the capital asset pricing model (CAPM). It is common practise for firm management to utilise WACC when deciding whether a project is viable to pursue, and investors use it to assess the value of an investment.

4. Findings and suggestions

In 2016–2017, the inventory turnover ratio was extremely low. There was a 7.34% increase from 2016–2017 to 2017–2018, and another 7.11% increase from 2020–2021. In the 2016–2017 fiscal year, the debtor's turnover ratio was extremely low. In 2017–2018, it was 9.14 times higher than in 2016–2017, and it continued to rise all the way up to 18.01 times in 2019–13. In the 2016–2017 fiscal years, the turnover ratio of creditors was extremely low. And in 2017 and 2018, it jumped to 10.51 times. And that number was 11.34 in 2020–2021. From 2016–2017, we saw an exceptionally high working capital turnover ratio. During 2017–2018, it dropped to 7.45 times, and in 2020–2021, it dropped to 6.66 times. At an average rate of 6.8 times, they have maintained the ratio. From 2017 to 2021, the working capital continues to rise. According to the operational cycle, the typical time it takes for the firm to convert its assets into cash is 35 days. Each year, the company's working capital grows. The fact that the company's profit is growing year after year bodes well for its ability to stay in business for the foreseeable future. The firm is in a stronger liquidity position and has enough working capital. Then, the turnover should go up if this short-term capital is used efficiently.

5. Conclusion

An encouraging indicator for the business is the rise in inventory turnover over the past year. Liquidity is good for the company. There is a sufficient amount of capital invested in current assets. Avoiding further investments in current assets would be prudent for the corporation since doing so would divert monies that may be put to better use elsewhere. Overall, the organisation is making great strides thanks to its top-notch leadership. Better management of working capital is possible when the ratio of current assets to current liabilities remains constant. In order to invest and collect receivables funds and decrease bad debts, the organisation should use preventative measures. It appears that following 2016–2017, the net operating cycle has stabilised. As a result, the operating cycle period is satisfactory for the organisation. A just-in-time method of raw material management could free up capital for other business needs. Payment and collection of debts from creditors and debtors should be the company's primary focus.

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