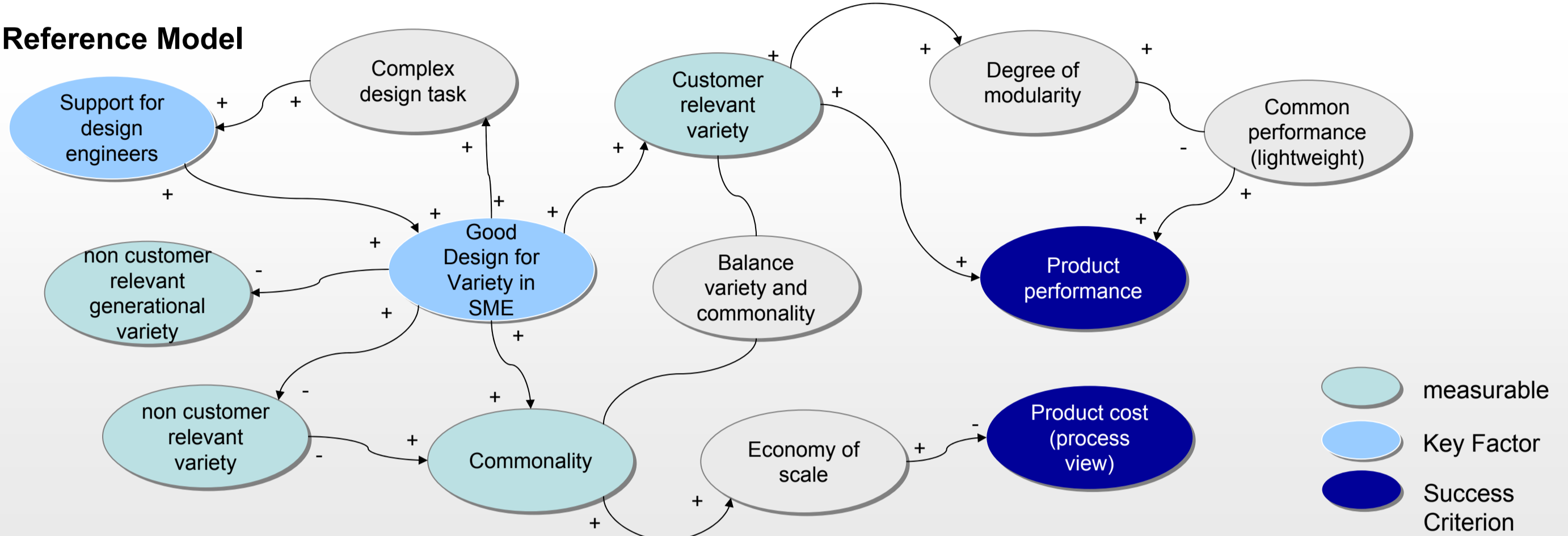




1. Research Questions and Hypothesis

- What characterizes the design (shape and architecture) of successful highly variant small batch products produced by SME?
 - Why SME don't use methods common in research for the design of their product families?
- Simple Methods (guidelines etc.) deliver useful support for the design of successful highly variant small batch products and find acceptance in SME.

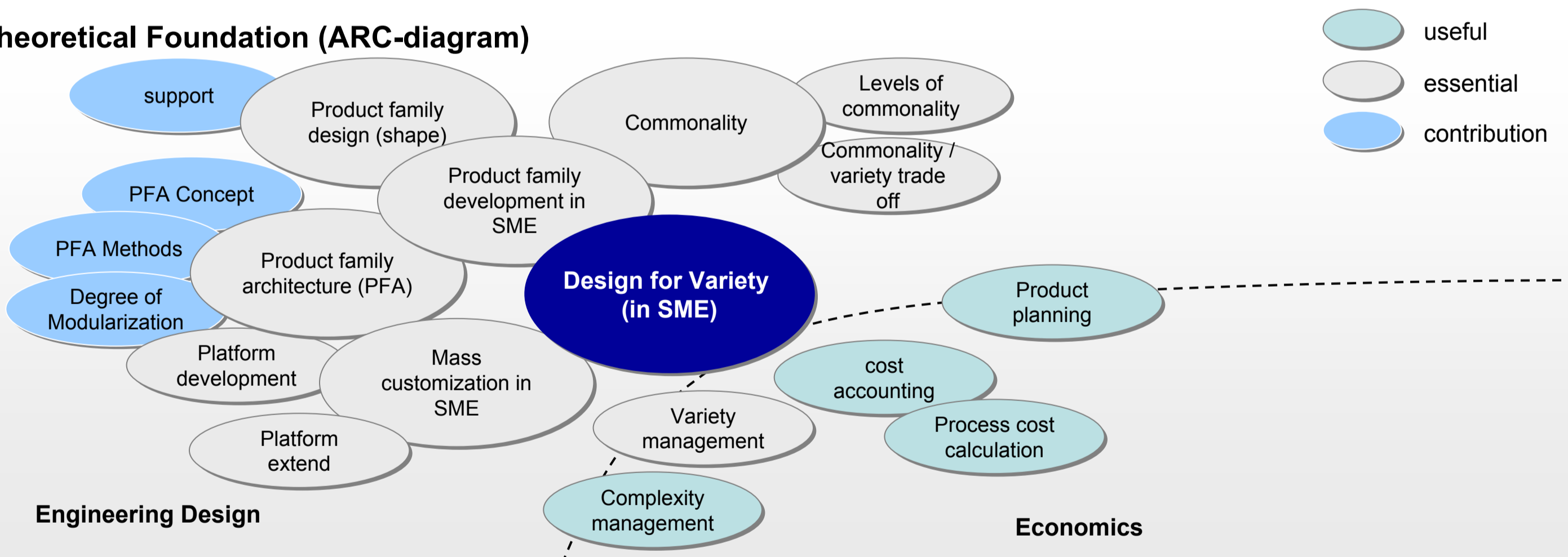
2. Reference Model



3. Research Approach



4. Theoretical Foundation (ARC-diagram)



5. Expected Results

- New insights regarding the design and architecture of successful highly variant small batch products.
- A new method for the support of product family architecture definition with regard to special SME requirements.
- Evaluation of the effectiveness and acceptance of the developed method.