

Practice Informed Theorizing

The primacy of prescriptive or constructivist approaches to management studies has been contested since the early days of time and motion studies (Taylor 1911), and dominance has shifted more than once in the ensuing decades. Starting in the early 1980s, in part because of Weick's (1979) influence, a social constructivist approach to understanding people and organizations has gained a considerable following, largely because it is grounded in detailed observation of individual, group, and organization decisions and actions while suspending pre-conceived notions of right and wrong. Whereas a prescriptive approach to management studies filters and evaluates observed behaviors through a frame that claims optimality and perfection, a constructivist approach moves through action-outcome- sensemaking cycles and develops a more nuanced set of explanations that are strongly informed by natural and social science scholarship that also respects the complexity and mysteries of human nature.

This workshop is intended as an introduction to the mindset that scholars should adopt when undertaking constructivist research, and to highlight methodologies and practices that help bring such scholarly undertakings to fruition. It is work that demands both mental discipline and playfulness. It invites the scholar to grapple intensely with ambiguities and contradictions in what is observed while suspending judgment until all possible insights have been gleaned from the data, and then returning to those observations with an eye toward synthesis and clarity that is at the same time comfortable with the idea that some things can and must remain unexplained. It is also an approach that demands that scholars study broadly across the social and natural sciences because no paradigm fully captures human nature.

Please register by July 1, 2022, 17h, by emailing Zuzana Schneiderova (Administration, Institute for Innovation Management) at schneiderova@lmu.de. Upon registration, additional information will be sent out.