

Preface

What Is in It for Researchers?

This inquiry aims at providing social scientists with theoretical concepts for their empirical work within the domain of organizations in general as well as organizational knowledge in particular. The developed concepts in Part I (“organizational knowledge”) may be used to interpret and frame empirical results of field studies (e.g., results from interviews, field notes, participatory observations, or artifact analysis). As Part I also defines different types and forms of organizational knowledge, it may also guide the construction of research questions and hypotheses.

More practical-oriented researchers may draw from the epistemological criteria of organizational knowledge developed in Part III (“organizational epistemology”). Research which is focused on the evaluation of effectiveness and quality of knowledge creation within a specific organization is provided with general criteria for successful knowledge creation. These criteria can be compared with the actual situation and eventually guide recommendations for adaption and (re)design of the organizational knowledge (creation) environment.

What Is in It for Practitioners?

This inquiry is also directed toward practitioners dealing with knowledge management (systems), organizational learning processes, or management in general. The developed framework of organizational knowledge (Part I) should enable the “reflective practitioner” to step back and to get a general view on the relation between organizing and knowledge. It should allow to identify and to classify core processes of the organization as knowledge creation and knowledge application activities. Furthermore, it should allow to understand challenges within the organization as epistemic challenges. This could help to develop alternative views and to trigger new solutions.

Similar to the practical-oriented researcher, Part III may provide the practitioner with a general framework on which (re)design and restructuring measures can be based. This inquiry is clearly an academic work combining theoretical notions from

various sources of organizational studies and philosophy. But it is especially the incorporation of philosophical epistemology which brings in a normative stance, i.e., *epistemological criteria* of knowledge creation (vs. mere *epistemic attributes* of organizations). Consequently, such epistemological criteria could support responsible actors in their activities to generate spaces of knowledge creation, both on micro- and macro-levels of the organization.



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Seirafi, K.

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