

The Divergence between Theory-Practice

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To Cite This Chapter

Djidjik, S., & Muragu, M. M. (2024). The divergence between theory-practice. In T. A. Oliveira, & M. T. Hebecci (Eds.), *Current Academic Studies in Technology and Education 2024* (pp. 326-352). ISRES Publishing

Introduction

Academicians for quite some time worried about the essence of scientific knowledge created in organization theory and wide application of this recognition to use. Nowadays scholars are frequently concerned with methodological accuracy since managers are striving to search the better way which can lead to real-world pertinence of knowledge. These discussions, which are stranded in the diverse habits where knowledge is generated and used up by managing scholars and practitioners, are revealed so far sociology domain (Jarzabkowski & Scherer, 2010). In one way or another scholar's practice in management was leaded by broader framed of institutions was more about the apparent appeal of the theory, articulated as respects to the problematic position of its 'applicability' for practice in management. Discussion regarding the overall issue of scientific knowledge produced in studies of M&O run into an abundant publicised specification of organization research on the foundation



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of the level to which operators and generators of knowledge are for collaboration especially in western countries (Wagner *et al*, 2008).

Considering the link between theory and practice is a tenacious and challenging problematic as respect to academicians who work in professional domain. Their goal is being on the duty of emerging knowledge that can be interpreted into services that lead to advancing practice. However, the mention indication ‘the gap between theory and practice’ rest as an abstract, plentiful issues in directing publications upraised alarms that scientific investigation has not become much convenient for finding solutions to practical issues (Van de Ven, & Johnson, 2006).

It has been demonstrated by (Beer, 2001; Gibbons *et al.*, 1994) that consulting studies don't seem to be useful to practitioners and don't get implemented due to the high disapproval of the academic discoveries. Likewise, academics who do not employ effectively their research are a subject of judgment, this what has been mentioned in several studies as Beyer & Trice, 1982; Hodgkinson, Herriot, & Anderson, 2001; Lawler, Mohrman, Morhman, Ledford, & Cummings (1985). The same case is observed for professional knowledge workers, Van de Ven, 2002; Weick, 2001, warn that are criticized for not considering the theory in their practice or in some case ignoring the importance to adjust practice by theory.

The proposed research will start with a literature review where challenge of using academic knowledge will be presented by highlighting the relation between theory-practice knowledge and the existing gap between academics and practitioners. For that, we emphasis on the divergence concerning theory-practice in the domain of M&O. Then we will present brief appraisal of the published works on the academic–practitioner divergence, we examine the involvement of the two chosen paradigms ‘functionalist’ and ‘interpretivist’. In this article, we propose a comparative sight to see which paradigm is more oriented to practical problem-solving.

This standpoint assigns to our comprehension of the gap in several ways. First, the literature has not yet given a talk the concern of which paradigm has more practical implications. This question looks forward to being answered. By reflecting this

question, we determine a different reason for the divergence, explicitly, the challenge of using scientific knowledge in academia and whether it is efficient when it is applied for managerial practices. This is significant because our analysis displays that bridging the gap may only be effective when the management knowledge produced is focused on practical issues. In this discussion paper, we explain how practical knowledge research is undertaken under functionalist and interpretivism paradigms to benefit both researchers and practitioners. One major question was addressed: Under which paradigm more practical implications could assist researchers to gain deeper understanding of the theory – practice gap?

A scientific knowledge production challenge

Certain practices taken from prestigious journals about the divergence between theory – practice raised the question of how it is possible to reduce this gap. Many academic practitioners of business and management were clearly arguable with YES, the divergence exists, however it must be revised in a specific angle to truly apprehend the state of the issue knowing that several studies have showed to which extent research and practice match each one (Grönlund, 2008).

In past few years there was a turn with regards to practice which was considered as a systematic item in business studies. Practical issues as regards to strategy implementation in management and in marketing were upraised in academia. Some efforts to improve theoretical problems started to interest more scholars in M&O.

There is a tendency between researchers accepting that the divergence concerning theory and practice may be a problematic of knowledge generation. For that, various opinions on knowledge are debated in several books and papers, particularly in the organization theory and philosophy of social sciences (Van de Ven & Johnson, 2006). Diverse visions on knowledge lead to altered conceptualizations. The main objective of scientific knowledge is to recognize the explicit circumstances as a more than a wide-ranging example that can be served to describe whether what is done can be functional or at least be implicit. The significance of every sort of knowledge should be taken within the way the problematic is covered (Dewey, 1938).

A number of essential concerns imply provocations and demand plenty of considerations especially when it comes to examine the conceptualization of acquaintance, methodology and their structured connection. Understanding of how the applied knowledge is maintained to relevance standards and moral fairness have to be carried out is essential. Such matter in question has importance on how the theory might possibly call for advancement and refinement that is functional and beneficial for extent application in the pragmatic world (e.g. hypotheses & suppositions imply assumptions for the purpose of expertise transfer (Jarzabkowski, & Scherer, 2010).

Scientific Knowledge is the key to operative competition. The challenge for companies requiring participation in knowledge-intensive sectors of the global company is to organize them so that they can recognize that, for example, academicians should understand that commercial knowledge is different from philosophical and scientific knowledge (Marc, 1997). Point to, from the many existing scientific knowledge approaches two main thought can be distinguished. Those who concentrate on the benefits an organization can derive from managing its knowledge usually through information technology and those focusing on the control of knowledge process through management issues (Offsey, 1997).

By definition, knowledge is considered as a potential of different concept's relationships. As a result, scientific knowledge is the perception of several discussions based on information value, communication, human resources & intellectual capital assets, etc. It implies dealing with numeral matters in particular its transformation, practicality, and quality. By mean of this, till now, scholars could not carry out and managing the whole knowledge process (e.g. control of effectual business, strategies implementation, evaluation of knowledge...etc.) Though, to do so, the key for efficient operation is a partnership between researchers-practitioners (Quintas & al, 1997).

Besides, Hollway (1991) debates that knowledge and practice, mainly within the field of M&O is tied-up. Alvesson (1991) had a like reflection by identifying the influence of non-involving theory on M&O research. In more recent years, however, practitioners appear to have more interest to theory because there is no good theory without practice as a "knowledge-product" and vice versa, in fact, at the present

practitioners seem to expect more resolutions and novelty in methods and strategies that can address today's issues in work (Collins, 1996).

For instance, Van and Johnson (2006) suggested another recommendation to scholars about how they could address the issue of generating a practical instruction, asserting that apart of engaging academics to improve the relevance of research for practice, this will be useful to enhance the meaningless knowledge in different areas of M&O. The ability to manage the divergence between theories and practices in management is come to be more and more serious in today's knowledge economy (Dalkir, 2013). Hence, covering the divergence between theories and practices in M&O is not that easy because the knowledge produced in scientific arena depends in the first line on the utilized methods According to (Rana, 2018).

The divergence between theory-practice knowledge

It is challenging for not misunderstanding the link between practical implications and the theories engendered by scholars, this challenge came up with failure in connecting the two concepts to business environment. And since, the 'theory-practice' calls for a reciprocal interpretation, academicians are pushed to display their theoretical results into practice and practitioners are pushed to display their practices into theory, obviously, this logical consideration implemented a misleading orientation (Van de Ven & Johnson, 2006).

Scholars such as (Beyer & Trice, 1982; Lawler et *al.*, 1985) criticized academic researchers for considering the transmission of scientific knowledge they produce. (Caswill and Shove, 2000) showed the fact that there are a lot of substantial questions and problems of theoreticians' growth which must be contingent on close commitment and partnership among scholar-practitioners. In his research paradigms in management (Huehn, 2008) proclaimed the fact that it is not surprising or even shocking to meet full time academicians of management who did not experienced what the business job looks like except as clients or consumers." Nevertheless, are those who make the rules in management which practitioners have no chance than follow.

In 2001, Beer recommends that researchers to be more committed for identifying how the generation of knowledge should be realistic. He likewise discussed the way the transfer of traditional knowledge to practice often hinder the application of proposed solutions (Beer (2001). As well, the work of scholars and practitioners differ in term of context, the purpose of practitioners is to find fast solutions to their problems that come across their daily activities, hence, the theory should not be complex to be accepted by them, is totally the contradictory for academics where time and money are not their ultimate concern, as such, academics give a deep examination to the problem and tasks that rise away in certain situations, and doing that might not lead all the time to finding consistent solution to sum up , practical knowledge is basically custom-built, coupled with know-how, and well oriented to changing aspects of precise situations and experience (Aram & Salipante, 2003).

Theory-Practice challenge in Philosophy of social sciences

Generally, scholars believe that theory and practice go in the same track and the integration concept ‘theory–practice’ is placed as respect to three types of challenges: Philosophical challenge, practical challenge and empirical challenge. Philosophy of social sciences might be defined as the use of the major ethics of philosophy to the practical labour issues of life. Hence, it compromises a certain conservative of main beliefs and approaches (epistemology, ontology, idealism naturalism etc.) as a definite set of aims and objectives (Leinhardt, McCarthy Young, & Merriman, 1995).

Theory-Practice challenge in practice

Theories are not designed to be put into practice. Theory describes practice but doesn’t prescribe practice. Modern society is becoming more complex, information system is becoming available and changing more rapidly prompting uses to shift into new directions and change our reflections to problem-solving strategies. Practice could facilitate and enhance with, essential convolution and uncertainty of the professional environment. As a result, problem-based starts with issues and require scholars, students to research to select, analyze and apply information and consistent theories and approaches to solve it (Barry and Elmes 1997).

Theory-Practice challenge in empirical research

The goal of the challenge is to create enduring and dynamic connections between the ways research practices are done within practice, asking the questions (what is the problem? what was done to study the problem? What was found? What do the findings mean? The observation-based investigating to discover and interpret facts and theories by relating human's interaction with useful concepts reflecting today's activities (Reason and Bradbury, 2001).

The paradigms discourse as a contribution to the special issue

During the mid-1960s, a special clue discussion in the field of organizational studies lined up whether the method of using knowledge or information is greatest ensure as of the theories and empirical studies of a distinctive research paradigm or as challenging ones. Well along in the mid-1990s, the accelerated discourse has been emboldened by other sights uttered by the US prominent scientist Jeffrey Pfeffer (1993, 1997). Projecting at this time is his following proposal “for attaining educational morality that suit practitioners, organizational study must go with generating a distinct paradigm of visibly which is relevant to practices and academics “(Hassard & Kelemen, 2002) advocate the prerequisite to transfer from a first and foremost scientific production perception on knowledge to one that holds actions of uptake and creation in a more reflexive way.

In managerial studies, the dispute on paradigms and their role in the research development was given impetus by the book of Burrell and Morgan's 1979 'Sociological paradigms and organizational inquiry'. This book drew numeral discussions vis-à-vis the knowledge produced in the field to bridge the gap between theory-practice. One of their chief opinions was that if we want to place the scientific consciousness in scene we must first possess a structuralism comprehension of the presumptions related to science. In the Burrell and Morgan's investigation, a consistent version of the concept of paradigm is incommensurability used. As these four incommensurable sociological paradigms: Functionalism, Interpretivism, Radical humanist and radical structuralist (See Fig 1).



Figure 16. Burrell and Morgan's paradigmatic Framework (1979).

Discussion

The contribution to the special issue

When we look at different approaches as regards to methods-theories, it is extremely instructive to look over the paradigms that originated with reference to altered lines of research. In the following discussion we mainly distinguish two empirically oriented approaches: Functionalist & Interpretivist. In overcoming some of the barriers of bridging the gap between theory – practice. This paper is contributing to the debate about which of the chosen paradigms in social research ‘Interpretivism’ vs. ‘Functionalism’ is more willing to produce effective knowledge that could support organizations and assist managers in their problem-solving issues (e.g. the choice of an appropriate methodology).

It might be argued in the literature of social sciences regarding the consideration of social reality in term of ontology and epistemology assumptions and in term of human's beings' nature (pre-determined or not) that the main leading approaches in knowledge management are those revealed as functionalist (Objectivist) and interpretivist (Subjectivist). For that reason, by doing a comparative analysis in a critical way, we are somehow contributing to ensure a complementarity between the

two paradigms and bringing an additional value to scientific knowledge practice produced by scholars and academicians (See Fig 2 below).

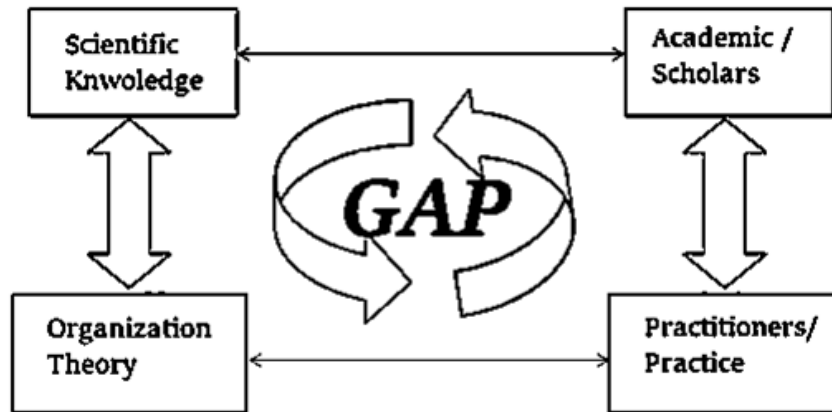


Figure 17. Model of the gap between research theory and practice

Realized by (Sihem Djidjik, 2023)

What we are going to discuss not either means that an interpretivist approach towards practice is upper- level to neither a functional approach nor the opposite. Both can be practiced in a one manner to another. However, it somewhat, to argument the efficiency of the research that can be more helpful for managers with respect to problem-solving of tendency issues they are facing at the present time. Edwards et al (2003) article titled knowledge management & research (vision & direction) highlighted how it is important for scholars to be open to multitude approaches and theories to enhance the knowledge management in the field of management and organization.

Functionalist/positivism: explanation and discussion

Epistemology has a vital consideration on the way research is conducted. It reflects the world view of researchers and guides the way research is implemented. Yet, positivistic epistemologies still the dominator of the managerial studies especially in human resource development research (Cal & Tehmarn, 2016). Moreover, the functionalist paradigm under the dimension of sociology of regulation has attention in providing clarifications regarding the status quo. It is focuses on the existing state of

affairs, especially regarding with social issues, and law which maintain the stability in scheme of linked social constructions & institutions, relations & customs, values & practices, which protect, preserve and impose certain shapes of connecting and acting, accepted opinion among a group of people, coexistence, collaboration and cohesion, common interest; mutual support within the society, and this paradigm is paid attention on the motivation to push the social members to become united (Sorm & Gunbayi, 2016).

Commonly connected with experiment and quantitative research, positivism is deliberated as a system of profession pragmatism which is one of the two forms of rationalist and empiricist approaches that considers knowledge as an objective and free from bias, that is, free from the values & beliefs of the research. And more, according to positivists (e.g. the prevailing prototype of sociology that applies the science of nature pattern to the study of community-based events, practice is considered purely like if we are applying a theory. When such paradigms used in application, managers will be apt to explain managerial circumstances, but also of foreseeing behavior and monitoring the organization (Ryan, 2018).

Research in a functionalist paradigm is in most of the scientific cases taken with an upgrade level of corresponding objectivity. Quantitative methods are highly used as determinant to provide accuracy to validate their scientific production (statistics), well-structured and seek for repeatability (objectiveness and generalizability) of the results (Steenhuis & de Bruijn, 2006).

Functionalism begins with the observation that behavior in society is structured; the dominant paradigm is accounting, finance and organizational theory. We can cite agency theory as well, positive accounting theory, systems theory, and contingency theory. This approach has an attention in basis reason and affect (this is produced by something else) and abstraction (the results are factual for everyone), the use of hypotheses testing, it also searches for fairness and trusts that an external entity of certainty exists, will emphasize connection, will perhaps be quantitative (statistical) and may also take in qualitative exertion such as face to face and online interviews. This clarifies that personal knowledge backed by scientific verification. Overall, it is

like thinking about an idea, after that test it then finally reports the results in a formal and scientific way.

Typical questions to functionalists are (what?) how much? Relationship between? Or (causes of this effect), it also uses longitudinal, cross sectional, correlational, experimental and methods. Useful examples that could be used in practice include Attitude of COVID19 pandemic towards online based work or relationship between employee's motivation and their company achievements and/or the effect of experience on the job performance of freshly graduated students. The researcher under this paradigm is independent, and the central objective is to describe and explain the behavior of individuals, groups and organizations under this approach is explained based on the facts and observation, unquestionable, the data is gathered using for example, deductive models.

Furthermore, evocative research include whatever is variable to a definite level and which can be measured such as (case studies & surveys, comparative & correlation studies, development & trend studies), else ways, preliminary research comprise thoughtful operation of assured aspects under extremely measured circumstances, the objective is to detect pivotal links while maintaining the scales of some regular and influencing variables, And for those who search for to design & do policy evaluation, positivism approach is well applied. In principle, it is disputed that, on a general theoretical level, modeling simultaneous interpreting (SI) in the context of the common functionalist theory of Vermeer (Skopos theory) for example helps to get into attention the critical cross-national issues of state, text, target values, textual autonomy, and "coherence" to case studies (Pöchhacker, 1995).

In real practice, most of functionalist theories opt for mechanical and biological correspondence as prototypical to understand the social world (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). Theoretically, this paradigm relies on the evidence that the society or an organization cannot survive if their members do not share at least some mutual attitudes and values. Eventually, the functionalist paradigm was framed by the interaction of three sets of intellectual forces such as Marxist theory, German idealism, and sociological positivism. Among the three cited forces, sociological positivism has

been the most influential and prominent one. The principal theories basically fit in to this paradigm are integrative theory, social system theory, interactionism, social action theory and objectivism etc. (Sorm & Gunbayi, 2016).

Without a clue, a robust request for an instrument for combining business & science research into expressive framework that can be useful to practitioners is needed. Positivists for instance, use the methodological ideology of choice in many research areas like (management and marketing). Point out another example, performance management and evaluation (PME) which is identified as a settled element of any managerial system of human resources. Conversely, most of research for ‘PME’s is conquered by a fundamental methodology placed under positivism/ ontology) (McKen et al, 2011).

Lastly, as it is known in Burrell and Morgan sociological paradigms, the comprehension of engineering’s is central under positivism paradigm because to understand human relations, we should have valid methods and models in it is realist approach (e.g. quantitative design) and nomothetic (e.g. methodological assumption) for social researchers. Adding to that, positivism in Mixed Methods Research (MMR) is well-matched with quantitative component of MMR, if we confer to its assumption, it uses methods of natural science to study its research scopes (e.g. experimental and manipulative design) after the verification of the assumptions (Gunbayi, 2020).

Interpretivism: Explanation and discussion

The interpretive approach is somehow considered like a rational system, as recognized clearly from Burrell & Morgan 1979, interpretive paradigm approves a subjective approach to analytical rationality & practice. The focal dissimilarity amid this approach and the functionalist approach is the epistemology arguments. Certainly, social reality doesn’t widely interest interpretivists from the point of view subjectivity, instead of doing that they try to focus on understanding the intentions of human beings to conceptualise social reality. Interpretivists strive to generate methodologies that fit with how people think. (Jackson, 2000) defines interpretive as an approach that strives to find out integrative values from a number of angles. By doing such assistance, it can

be a helpful technique to support managers in forecasting and controlling their outcomes.

Referring interpretivist as an approach to management can benefit practitioners in their managerial tasks. For instance, in the interpretive approach Morgan description to metaphor of context was linked in the first point to culture and politics where everyone could assign meaning to his/ her situation. This could make an organization a better place in term of practice. As an example, to highlight the gap between theory and practice through this designated paradigm is the 'soft system tradition of work' this system is considered as one of the most glowing in the declination systems, it affords practitioners with more methodologies, models and techniques which are extremely involving into settling and determining practical issues (Jackson, 2000).

To understand the relationship between society and the individual in term of the proposed mode, people have consciousness and are not unbiased marionettes who respond to the external world which mean that humankind are intricate, multifaceted, and distinct individuals' knowledge and apprehend the identical independent reality in unlike ways. Indeed, individuals have motives for their activities and choices.

The essential point in focus stating of this social research paradigm is to understand profoundly the distinctiveness of respondents, to gain an empathetic thoughtful of the central question 'why individuals act in the way they do'. Scholars in this way prefer to deal with qualitative methods in which manner it allows them to close their interaction with respondents. On one hand, this criterion prefers humanistic qualitative methods, most of their research methods derive from social action theory. For weber this theory emphasizes is to understand the role of the active individual in shaping their identity. Plus, research in an interpretivist paradigm, would be likely to be take on in a more personal corresponding way in which societal researchers work.

There is a hope in the accentuation on qualitative approaches and scholars would have better do effort to justify the changeable environment of society when using applicable methods for the distinctive circumstances where they observe themselves. To help practitioners, the research methodology used in the interpretivism likely to be slightly

organized and focus more on analysis as another option as assumptions & arguments (Holden & Lynch, 2004).

It is indeed well seen in practice, the approach above use more qualitative, personal documents, participant observation, unstructured interviews. This approach seeks for something with bias and value laden. Additionally, research tends to be finished in better facet and stares at values and cultures. Therefore, in our opinion this paradigm has high validity because it is a true representation to the reality and reliable enough. Interpretivism under this statement represent what out to be (normative). Undoubtedly, the theory used has high-rise efficacy (e.g. data is more constant and truthful), qualitative data is detailed in depth and accurate into what is really happening. Interpretivists don't search for descriptions instead; they want reason to understand the habit of impeding consistency and emblematic. Consequently, the outcomes will be private and hard to be generalized. In fact, the thing that could be considered as disadvantageous is the incline to include emotions and leaning in their interpretations. Other drawbacks such as time efficacy, money, cost and the difficulty to replicate the events may not be seem beneficial.

For instance, Ragsdell (2009) urges management and organization instructors to opt for a functionalist approach in the early stages of their research. However, some called rigid problems have been wriggled to find pertinent clarifications to technological–softer problems which bring more challenges for practice because it applies social aspects. Ragsdell argued that if study actions are to persist proportional with the kind of the theme being researched and, thus, endure operational, then in this case it is suggested to better apply interpretive approach. And he debated that the move from a functionalist perception to a more interpretive perception bring into line the inception of innovative knowledge management that are more directed with handling implicit by contrast to explicit knowledge and progressively pressure the concepts of social communication instead of the role of technology.

For interpretivists empirical studies are crucial, for example, it is essential that the storytelling is told so build accurate interpretations. This can lead to idiographic study, which provides rich description focused on telling a story context in organizational

management. This kind of research can help in providing rich information; interpretivist approach could build theories instead of assuming hypothesis. What should be considered in this sort of study is its aim to unravel a practical problem. However, to make the work scientifically respected, it is necessary to apply other assessment standards (Steenhuis & de Bruijn, 2006).

As regards to (Steenhuis & de Bruijn, 2006). Another example that could be illustrated in this case is the conduction of a design study which is mostly interested in looking at 'if its works' rather than at 'what reality means? One 'mistake' made with this kind of research is that researchers improve an instrument to assess a company's performance. This instrument is utilized, and expectations are extracted about the performance of the company as an alternative to the instrument itself. This is a big error because the taken research in this case is not adapted to assessing if the instrument functions properly but moderately supposes that it does. This hypothesis is unacceptable seeing as how the instrument was validated. To clarify the issue, it is desirable to approach it in an interpretivist view, this means that the role of the study as well as the techniques of collecting the data and those of analysis have the duty to be transmitted since they are considered as a foremost matter in the overall evaluation.

Another case in point that we find crucial to talk about in as regards to this paradigm is the information systems field. In information system research field scholars take a strong stance on the interpretive view as the supreme useful in practice comparing to functionalist approach. The interpretive style is being anticipated as the utmost suitable paradigm for information management research which deals with persons and beliefs. The decision was justified by taking an example of information management research – the integrated foundational learning project and criticizing results in contradiction of epistemological assumptions of interpretivists. It was as well specified in the literature that "phenomenology" is the ideal methodology to study systems of information since it go with the deliberation of actors (Orlikowski & Baroudi, 1991).

Acquiring the mentioned paradigm can deliver deeply understanding of deginite perspectives for instance cross-cultural studies, factors that influence development over collection and interpretation of 'qualitative data' directing to profound

comprehension and suppositions that may be unlike from other results as argued by (Myers, 2008; Saunders *et al.*, 2012). Implementation of the interpretivism paradigm would help in making high-level viability in data as it is founded on personal contributions with consideration of several variables and factors such as behavioral traits based on participants' experiences, and this would assist to designate reality given the suppositions of the interpretivist investigator (Alharahsheh, 2020).

One of the specific interpretive standards of (Klein & Myers) is cared about the relationship stuck between researchers & practitioners or in another manner "the principle of interaction between the researchers and subjects". This entails that empirical data building is perceived as a procedure of constructed meanings in social life, e.g. socially constructed by researchers and participants which signifies that lots of interpretive researchers seem to work close to the practice field might be indicate a connection in practical studies (Goldkuhl, 2012).

Finally the example is related to the integration of interpretivist method to looking for facts in supply chain management. It was founded that the interpretive approach can be used in SCM and the fact that this approach could help in evolving practices that recognize the essentials of a framework (e.g. contextualized logic). By starting with understanding behavior *in context* (i.e., in the focal domain), the interpretive approach facilitates understanding of how managers interpret, react to, and influence their environments. The empathetic understanding to interpretive research facilitates the reconciliation of the particulars of the domain with existing supply chain models (SCM) and practices to elaborate marginal rate of technical substitution (MRT). There is also amplification of the theory which wishes to settle theory with the cultural particularities to both refine and broaden existing frameworks by using interpretive approach (Darby et al, 2019).

The environment in which an organization comes upon is a product of past enactments of that organization (Hassard & Pym, 2012). Let's take a realistic illustration relating to the US Apple industry. This manufacturing views itself occupying a sluggish environment which, apart from its feature to compete foreign industries such as Samsung through an earlier move to the production of similar mobile phones, this is

independent of its own decision, however what the Apple industry will be like if it had emerged rapid technology like a phone with a robot features, or with an advanced system information processing industry. Up to that point, we might expect some change in the whole process of design making/conception. In this way, the Apple industry has not been innovative enough, and the non-actions in this regard in part account for its present circumstance. This is how interpretivist approach should be reflected by companies, as far as the world is functioning according to our own decision making, individuals require yielding meaningful perceptions to their ultimate choices (See in table 1 below the differences between Positivism vs. Interpretivism).

Table 1. Main differences between Interpretivism and positivists/Functionalists

Positivism/ Functionalist	Interpretivism
Mode terms	
Objective/ Generalisability	Subject/ Human being motives
Comparison and correlations	Emotions and Empathy
More scientific	More Humanistic
Detached from the participant	Close interaction with participants
Applied research methods	
Quantitative methods	Qualitative methods
Statistics	Documnetation
Surveys / Questionnaires	Observation/ Controlling
Structured interviews	Unstructured interviews
Analytical framework and critical evaluation	
Predefined and generalized (organization theory, agency and contingency theories)	Emergent and more specific / research process
Causal and relations between many variables	Relation between particular variables
Nature of reality	
Reality is single	Realities are socially constructed

Research influence	
Practices and research are separate enterprises	Research affects context (action research)
Human Behaviour	
Believes that human behaviour is based on social norms	Believes that individuals are complex
Believes that society shapes individuals	Each has a different experience

Contributions to the special issue

The value of Burrell and Morgan framework in both practical and theoretical dimensions is slightly shrinking due to the fact that most of scholars in management and greatest number of the practitioners are positioned in one paradigm section which is the functionalist one. Our aim in this discussion paper is not to criticize those who prefer positivist view, rather, we choose to compare between the two paradigms as regards to the existing gap between theory and practice, we are quite subjective in our analysis since we see widely that the positivist approach could not care less a crucial consideration to instrumental tools, the link that exist between multitude circumstances , or in another way it does not arrive yet to explain explicitly the existing link in a consistent manner. Besides, the knowledge used in connection with the methodologies used in positivism paradigm to comprehend the world naturally could not be exchangeable or referable to our society which means that this approach is exposed to several limitations and challenges while trying to simplify and control certain assumed variables and hence, generalizability could lead to misleading the goal of individuals.

There is shadowing disagreements from here and there requesting the point that paradigms should not be mixed, they should be distinctive, alright, both have to do with right and wrong? It utterly depends on the purpose of the research and the chosen methodologies. For this comparison approach between interpretivism vs. positivism, what can be largely mastered referring to our discussion is that to bridge one of the divergences ‘Theory-Practice’ it is necessary to develop interpretivist approach since

it is tried to be used in so many recent issues (big data analysis, supply chain management, human resource development, information system and so on).

Noticeably, this gap exists because of the lack and the neglect of practical knowledge by scholars to guide their practice participation. The primary non – success within the theory–practice gap is the absence of research incorporation within current managerial practices. Sure, every paradigm contains different goals and perspectives, for that matter, the evaluation should different itself, as well as the distinction between the two paradigms. It is necessary to consider interpretive approach as a practical- theoretical portfolio. We see that interpretivism could be used to make the research design more scientifically precise in the real context of practice this means it more derived to be practical.

The difference between academic management literature and the perspective of managers is a significant explanation for the supposed implication of theory into practice. It would be more interesting to focus of multi-directions of contexts this will aid in making a choice of developing the research paradigm. By contributing to scientific knowledge, we need to ask the following question: What should the nature of the study be valued in? By making the study clearer of how it contributes/ relates to the theory, we better ask further question: What type of study could be more useful in practice?

Dealing with single case study to provide in-depth knowledge and clear communication to our data (in all its steps) needs an interpretive perspective since this paradigm response the question of what is proper for being interesting. So, the performance will be enhanced. To sum up, how researchers might engage with organizations, this is what matters more: by predefining of what is best practice instead of engaging in infinite judgments, useless arguments and sorry for the word some meaningless researches to provide best practice its more convenience to engage with practitioners to understand how practice change, evolve, make a progress in the business world , by doing that, researchers could bring new strategies and improve their theories which will have a practical value.

The question we would like to ask scholars dealing with practical issues ‘in which way bridging the gap between theory-practice should be taken’? (Do we need more empirical studies, more theoretical tools, more qualitative research?). This question was not developed yet (See the created model (Fig3) below for more understanding of the gap).

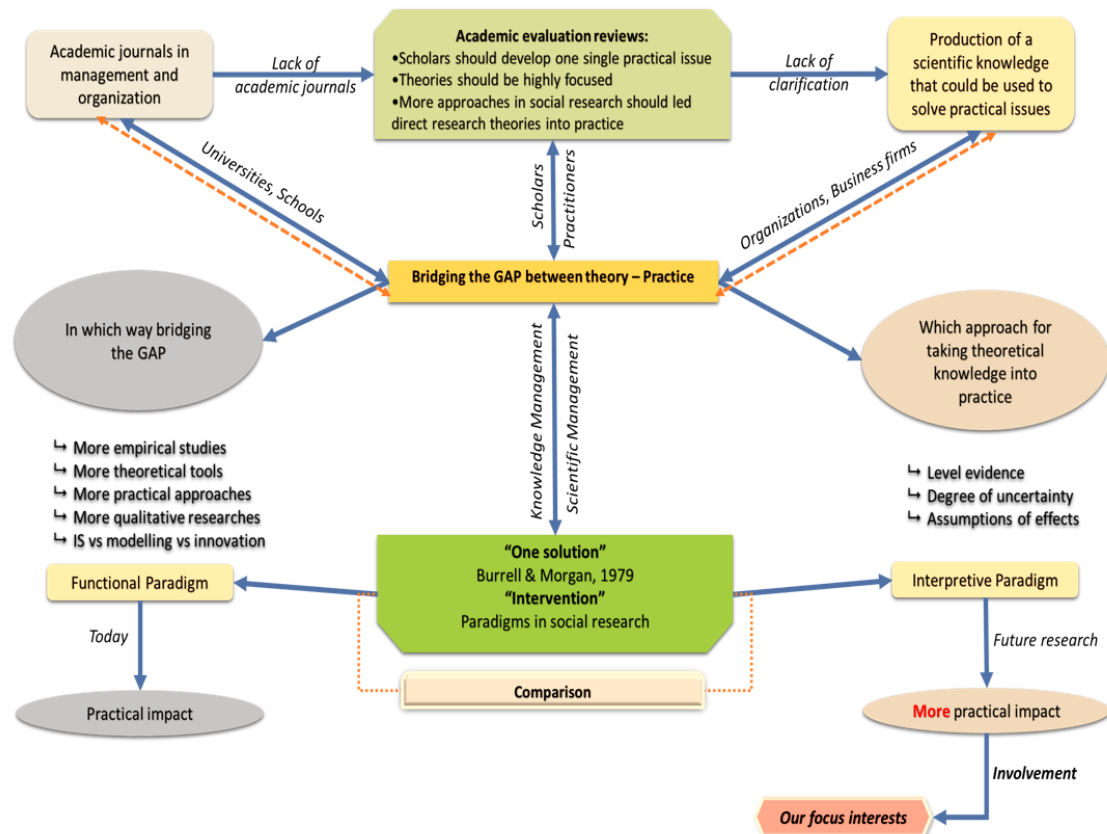


Figure 18. A model for analysing the gap between theory and practice by using Burrell & Morgan paradigms Realized by (Sihem Djidjik, 2023).

Conclusion

Without a doubt, academics have suggested on many occasions (conferences, scientific journals and books) the use of diversified research methods that can be used and applied significantly in real practice and clearly there is a robust urge for a tool that could be meaningful for management scholars to help practitioners. However, still today, most of scholars in the field of management have gone somehow to advocate

the use of multi-methods with ‘functionalist/positivism approach’ and which is obviously leading the field of M&O. This issue may limit the new generation of scholar’s aptitude to open innovative toolbox to further theories under other paradigms (i.e. include interpretive research methods) and propose realistic explanations that could be workable to today’s ‘theory-practice’ challenges.

As business arena is enlarged, and scholars pursue to investigate in the field of applied management, in the future there will be a better practical alignment in term of theory-practice. Though, today, this is not the case.” Perhaps interpretive approach will find a way to the gap amongst the academic and industrial arena, context, and mindset do require a change in paradigms among practitioners and scholars intentionally.

If we arrive to overpass the interlude uniting theory and practice, we will be able to adopt novelties from management research into practical application. For future research suggestions/ challenges it is essential for us as future scholars to start focusing on contemporary organizational phenomena to enhance the effectiveness and maximise the profit of big firms and small enterprises. Which approach for taking knowledge into practice will be more appropriate? (Level of evidence, degree of uncertainty, assumptions of effects), that kind of studies have not been studied before and it is time to do so.

Acknowledgements

We would like to express my sincere gratitude to Yildirim Beyazit University for providing the academic environment that fostered the development of this research article. A special thanks to the Department of Management and Organization and all the esteemed professors who contribute to the vibrant academic atmosphere. We also extend heartfelt appreciation to Professor Hasan Engin Sener for his unwavering support and guidance throughout our research journey. His valuable insights and daily encouragement have significantly enriched the quality of this work.

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