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Symbolic Interactionism as a Methodology for Process Organization Studies: Grounding the Enactment of Competences in Organizational Life

Abstract – Management research often treats the competences within firms as fait accompli. Process organization studies can tackle this challenge through focusing on how and why competences emerge. We propose that symbolic interactionism is a suitable process philosophical framework to explore the social organization immanent in the accomplishment of key organizational processes. Through drawing on ethnography and the construction of living stories, a reconstructive empirical study of an organization shows how role taking contributes to competences.

Keywords: Symbolic interactionism, social organization, story, process organization studies, organizational competence

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