

Call for papers (EN)

Two-day Seminar on Practice Theories:

*Opportunities for Management Research in the context of
our Society in Transition*

October 12th and 13th, 2023

Organized by the Chair in Innovative Management Practices (Brussels)

The practice turn emerged in the 2000s in Management and Organization Studies (Gherardi, 2016). Although it is a particularly heterogeneous movement (Nicolini, 2012), this body of research demonstrates an interest in situated action, a rejection of dualism, and a focus on the mutual constitution between agency and social orders (Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011). In fact, the practice turn is in line with many authors who are interested in the actions, gestures, (micro)dynamics, rituals, discourses, etc. that construct social order. The practice turn finds its roots in social philosophy that developed anti-dualistic thinking, notably the work of Ludwig Wittgenstein and Martin Heidegger (e.g. Guzman, 2013). Then, the writings of Pierre Bourdieu, Anthony Giddens or Bruno Latour have largely inspired this movement. Finally, thanks to the contemporary works of Andreas Reckwitz, Theodore R. Schatzki and Silvia Gherardi, the practice turn has been founded theoretically and empirically.

This two-day seminar aims to explore the contributions of an as-practice approach to current MOS research, in the context of our Society in Transition. Well-developed in the field of strategy, Practice theories are now being used in all sub-disciplines of management. Whether it is to study the impact of tools (of socio-materiality) on social phenomena (e.g. Jarzabkowski & Kaplan, 2015) or to question the anthropocentrism of current research and develop alternative views (Kokkinidis & Checchi, 2023). During this seminar, we therefore welcome papers in accounting-as-practice (e.g. Ahrens & Chapman, 2007), marketing-as-practice (Skalen et al., 2022), entrepreneurship-as-practice (Thompson et al., 2022), HR-as-practice (Espegren & Hugosson, 2022) and management-as-practice (Gherardi & Laasch, 2022), etc., without distinction.

While all research mobilizing Practice theory is welcome, two particular orientations are privileged.

1) Paradoxical practices and tensions: Practices are a relevant approach to study Management and organizations, in particular, because they allow us to highlight the tensions, paradoxes or contradictions that emerge from the arrangement of human and non-human elements that form the practice (e.g. Jarzabkowski et al., 2018). These elements raise - for example - the following questions:

- a. What do practice approaches tell us about the organizational tensions at work?
- b. How do we capture paradoxical tensions in organizations today?
- c. What practices can be used to deal with paradoxical tensions?
- d. How to identify paradoxical tensions empirically?

2) Practices and Society in Transition: The environmental and social issues on which the survival of our humanity depends are increasingly integrated into MOS research, well beyond the initial work in CSR (Pizzi et al., 2020). These issues in the context of MOS research with as-practice lens can lead to the following questions:

- a. What practice to achieve Sustainable Development Goals?
- b. What practice can support the development of responsible management?
- c. Which practice in order to teach management differently?

In methodological terms, as-practice approaches advocate immersive and generally qualitative methods such as ethnomethodology, case studies or ethnographies (Gherardi, 2012). This seminar also proposes to address the question of methodology. Yet, any communication is welcome - theoretical, empirical, epistemological... Similarly, all sectors of activity are concerned by this call (market, non-market, public, private...).

The seminar will be held in French and in English. It aims to be a first space of reflection around these questions with the possibility of common publications.

References

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- Gherardi, S. (2012). *How to Conduct a Practice-based Study*. Edvard Elgar.

- Gherardi, S. (2016). To start practice theorizing anew: The contribution of the concepts of agencement and formativeness. *Organization*, 23(5), 680–698.
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- Kokkinidis, G., & Checchi, M. (2023). Power matters: Posthuman entanglements in a social solidarity clinic. *Organization*, 30(2), 288–306.
- Nicolini, D. (2012). *Practice Theory, Work, and Organization: An introduction*. Oxford University Press.
- Pizzi, S., Caputo, A., Corvino, A., & Venturelli, A. (2020). Management Research and the UN sustainable development goals (SDGs): A bibliometric investigation and systematic review. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 276.
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Organizing Committee:

Chair in Innovative Management Practices (ICHEC Brussels Management School)

<https://www.ichec.be/fr/CPMI>

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Calendar:

Extended abstract submission (1 - 2 pages): **September 10th, 2023**

Notification of acceptance: September 15th, 2023

Submission of presentations (optional): October 5th, 2023

Practical information:

The event will take place in person, only, at the Montgomery site of ICHEC Brussels Management School (Bd Brand Whitlock 4, 1150 Woluwe-Saint-Pierre).