That’s Replicable: Building Cumulative Knowledge in the Face of Fads, Obsessions, and Malpractices in Management and Entrepreneurship Research

There is growing concern about the veracity and robustness of knowledge claims made by organizational researchers. The failure to confirm the findings of landmark studies, along with a drastic increase in retractions rates at many reputable journals and high-profile cases of research fraud, have raised questions about the trustworthiness of both findings and established research practices. The purpose of this plenary is to discuss the role of replication – independent confirmation of published findings – in advancing knowledge in the face of fads, obsessions, and malpractices among academics. A panel of distinguished senior scholars will share their views on why (or why not) replication can help build cumulative knowledge in management and entrepreneurship research. We will have plenty of time for audience members to ask questions and engage with the panel.

PANELISTS

Per Davidsson (Jönköping International Business School, Sweden): “A straight replication of somebody else’s work is difficult to get published in a highly ranked journal. If you ask me, this shouldn’t be the case—the outlets that published the original work should also make room for succinct replication manuscripts that support or question it.”

Connie Helfat (Dartmouth’s Tuck School of Business, USA): “I feel that in the broad management field the issue of replication has become much more complicated than I could have imagined years ago.”

Jeff McMullen (Indiana University Kelley School of Business, USA): “I am somewhat skeptical about replication studies. Too often they appear to be thinly veiled hatchet jobs as opposed to attempts to create knowledge. As a result, few scholars seem to want to read them and fewer still to cite them.”

Herman Aguinis (GW School of Business, USA): “When done well, exact and constructive replications enable both knowledge accumulation and theory development in ways that expand science and practice, to their mutual benefit.”

Moderated by:

Vishal K. Gupta (The University of Alabama, USA)