



Special Issue Call for Papers: Interventionist Research

Guest Editors

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Interventionist research is part of a family of methodological approaches to doing field research in accounting and management. Its distinguishing characteristic is that the researcher is directly involved in the real-time flow of events instead of observing at a distance or working with *ex post* facts. Interventionist research is grounded in action when refining, testing, illustrating or constructing theory (Jonsson and Lukka, 2005). It aims to uncover the “theory-in-use” rather than the “espoused theory” (Argyris et al., 1985) held by the subjects and, as such, is part of the larger family of qualitative research methods.

As the name indicates, interventionist research means the researcher directly intervenes in practice, usually as part of a mixed practitioner-academic team effort to change a current situation or solve a problem. Interventionist research implies an active engagement with reasoning according to local logic and practice rather than from a merely conceptual perspective. However, the practical involvement needs to lead to theoretical contributions in order to qualify as research instead of consulting.

Interventionist research tends to come in two flavours; weak intervention and strong intervention. Weak intervention involves a low level of participation by the researcher, for example through questioning and dialogue with the organization’s members. Strong intervention involves a high level of participation, for example through proposing alternative solutions and approaches to the organization’s members. In both cases, the interventionist researcher is part of a joint team. As such, strong interventionist research can be considered alongside approaches such as action research, clinical research, constructive research and design-based research.

The purpose of this Special Issue is to provide a forum for the discussion of interventionist research in accounting and management. It aims to deepen existing theoretical insights, provide further empirical evidence of the (relatively scarce) use of interventionist research, and initiate the formulation of specific approaches and methods related to the use of interventionist research.

Topics of interest for the Special Issue include but are not limited to:

- Deepening the epistemological foundations of interventionist research as a research methodology
- The use and positioning of interventionist research within typical intervention contexts such as organizational learning, implementation of accounting and

information systems, and organizational restructuring including mergers and acquisitions

- Case-based descriptions of various forms of doing interventionist research in terms of methods and approaches used
- The combination of interventionist research with other qualitative and quantitative research designs and methods
- Personal reflections and (hi)stories of conducting interventionist research
- Specific approaches to identifying, formulating, and extracting theoretical contributions from the intervention process, including the subsequent communication of findings and contributions
- National traditions in (existing) interventionist research beyond those originating from Scandinavia.

Interventionist research is not limited to any particular area of accounting or management, or to any particular setting such as the public, private or not-for-profit sectors. Rather, as a research methodology, it can be of equal use to refine, test or construct theoretical contributions around introducing IT systems, improving performance measurement, integrating internal or external reporting, effecting organizational change, learning, educating organizational members, designing collective decision-making and participative leadership styles etc.

We particularly encourage submissions to this Special Issue that take a multidisciplinary approach, for example by involving authors from different disciplines or by using a framework derived from other social sciences such as health care, design engineering, pedagogics or sociology. The fact that interventionist research is part of a larger family of action-oriented research methodologies allows for cross-pollination in terms of arguments, specific approaches, and application contexts; all in order to avoid reinventing the wheel when it comes to the field of accounting and management.

References:

Argyris, C., R. Putnam and D. McKain Smith (1985). *Action Science*. San Francisco CA: Jossey-Bass.

Jönsson, S. and K. Lukka (2005). *Doing Interventionist Research in Management Accounting*. GRI-report 2005:6, Gothenburg Research Institute.

Deadline for submissions

The deadline for submissions is March 1, 2009.

Accepted papers are scheduled for publication in March 2010 and will be subject to the regular double-blind review process of *QRAM*. Please prepare your manuscript according to *QRAM* guidelines, available at:

http://info.emeraldinsight.com/products/journals/author_guidelines.htm?id=qram

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